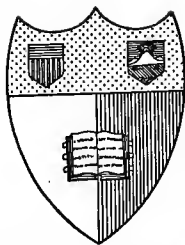




John Carter



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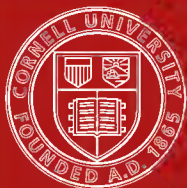
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THE LIFE
OF
JOHN CARTER.

BY
FREDERICK JAMES MILLS.

With Illustrations.



NEW YORK:
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P R E F A C E .

THE following narrative is published not only as a record of a remarkable physical phenomenon, or as a case which has excited a just sensation amongst Artists no less than throughout the medical world of Great Britain, but as the record of a life that, taken from whatever point of view it may, can hardly fail to strengthen and encourage all who read it.

The whole story of John Carter and the development of his genius as an artist is so brimful of interest and incident, so wonderful, so unprecedented, so simple, and so true, withal, that it is believed it will not only amuse, but perhaps benefit many.

The details are taken chiefly from a memoir written by the Rev. William James Dampier, Vicar of Coggeshall, Essex, England (Carter's native place), whose text has

been closely followed, and will be found to explain the life of the man, his personal character, the remarkable-physical phenomena connected with his accident, and his wonderful method of drawing by means of his mouth after he became paralyzed.

The medical student anxious to become better acquainted with facts of the highest interest in connection with his researches into anatomy or physiology, the artist pupil aiming at true success in his pursuit, the general reader actuated by no such special considerations, or last, though not least, the Sunday-school teacher and scholar, and especially the poor, the afflicted, the distressed, may each for himself or herself draw matter no less attractive than instructive and consoling, from the contemplation of John Carter's example of suffering affliction and of patience.

F. J. MILLS.

LYNN, MASS., *September*, 1868.

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"I enclose the four Engravings you will perceive every care has been taken to render them as perfect a fac-simile as possible.

"W. HOLL."

"I never saw more faithful representations of any drawings than the Engravings of Holl from John Carter.

"GEO. RICHMOND."

MEMOIR.

JOHN CARTER was born at Coggeshall, in the County of Essex, England, of humble parents, on the 31st of July, 1815, and baptized on the 27th of August following.

He was put to a dame's (or infants') school in Church Street, Coggeshall, for some years; and afterwards, when about nine or ten years old, to the Parish National School, where he remained until the year 1828, when he was removed into the endowed school in the town, founded by the charity of Sir Robert Hitcham. There he continued about two years.

During his boyhood, he was not remarkable for any particular talent. He was of quicker parts, indeed, than the generality of boys, and, as is too commonly the case, was more frequently in mischief.

The only sign he showed, when at school,

of the particular talent which was afterwards developed in a providential way, and to a marvelous extent, as will be noticed by and by, was a disposition to scribble the figure of a man, a horse, or a bird, or such like thing, upon his desk or copy-book, when he should have been doing his lessons; or, as he naively remarks in a letter to the Rev. W. J. Dampier: "It was when I went to school that I first remember having an inclination for drawing. Whenever I had a pen or pencil in my hand, I was sure to be drawing in my books, or on my slate, and at home about the walls of the house." But if during the whole of his time at school he was little different from the general run of boys with whom he was brought up, showing small sign of virtue, he yet experienced, though unconsciously, the blessing of honest parents, who had more care for him than he had for himself, and whose lives were conspicuous examples of industry and integrity amongst the cottagers of Coggeshall.

When John Carter left the Hitcham

school, he was put to work with one Charles Beckwith, at the silk-weaving trade, which at that time was a gainful employment, returning, after a very little practice, to a steady hand twelve shillings or more a week.

In 1835, he married, pursuing his calling as a silk-weaver on his own account, until he met with the accident which was the turning-point in both his character and history.

The good seed which had been sown in his infancy and childhood had as yet brought forth but little fruit. He was not altogether without respect for his parents, or care for those belonging to him; but his habits were very irregular, and his natural quickness, not being under the control of any fixed religious principle, exposed him the more to temptation. Some of his fellow-workmen, and not the best, became the companions of his leisure, or, as it seems, idle hours. The excitement of wild mirth and rambling adventure had often more power with him than the quiet of his own home.

He was, like most of the youth of our own and every day, impatient of restraint; and it pleased God, in His wisdom and love, as Carter thankfully acknowledged, to cast him down, and bind him with invisible cords, that he might be free indeed. Carter was accustomed to spend much of his earnings, and much of his time, at the public-house, — a certain sign of a depraved condition, and of readiness for mischief. This is what he says in the same letter to Mr. Dampier (just quoted): —

“And following the example of my fellow-workmen, I was frequently at the public-house, and soon took delight in all evil and mischief.”

He neglected the religious observance of the Lord's day, often wandering about the fields with evil companions, instead of going to church.

It chanced, as the phrase is, that he and some of his companions, one Saturday night, in the month of May, 1836, were attracted to the rookery at Holfield Grange, near Coggeshall, the seat of Osgood Han-

bury, a well-known banker of London, and John Carter, forward in the evil enterprise, ascended first one of the tall trees in search of birds. When he had reached a height of about forty feet from the ground, the limb of another tree, to which he is said to have been crossing, yielded more than was calculated upon, or deceived him by its distance; he missed his hold, and fell to the earth upon his back. He was taken up senseless, and from that time never moved hand or foot. He was conveyed home to his wife on Sunday morning, upon a hurdle, by his miserable and affrighted companions; medical assistance was procured, and relief was afforded, for the recovery of his senses; but a serious injury to the spine had deprived him of all power of voluntary motion below the neck: the mischief, which was at the fifth, sixth, and seventh vertebræ, paralyzed the whole body downwards, and was such that death might be expected to ensue in a few days. Still he lived; but the paralysis was perpetual. The muscular power of the neck was retained, no perma-

nent mischief sustained by the organs of the head, and the faculties were unimpaired; and if to this is added a very slight power of motion in the chest and the left shoulder, we have all the muscular power which was left to John Carter by his accident.

For a while the poor fellow was filled with distress for his physical condition, and with shame and vexation for the whole event; but to this succeeded, by and by, a time of reflection upon his state spiritually, and upon the great purpose hid under this chastisement. The wanderer had been struck down by the unseen hand which was to bring him home again. And now the seeds of grace, early sown, cleared of those evil habits which, as rank weeds, kept them down unproductive, and fostered by the ministrations of the then vicar of the parish, the Rev. A. C. J. Wallace, and the warnings and counsels of afflicted parents, had room and encouragement, under the favoring circumstances of this bodily mischief, to spring up and bear fruit.

The sympathy of all was excited for the poor fellow; no efforts were wanting to do him service; relief for the body was freely offered, and amusement for the mind, as well as instruction and consolation for the spirit. He had never altogether laid aside the practice of private prayer, but now he became more regular and earnest, and read the Scriptures frequently, but seems to have found his great strength and comfort in the use of the 119th Psalm, which he would read and ponder over continually.

A moment's reflection here will serve to fetch home to the reader's mind the helpless, the forlorn, not to say abject, condition of this poor young fellow at the moment of his fall from the fir-tree at Holfield Grange. Just entering manhood,—barely twenty-one years old,—plunged into a state more impotent, physically speaking, than an infant's! Is it possible to conceive of any condition in life so likely to drive a sensitive person to absolute despair? Hopelessly helpless! Hopelessly useless! What a future! What could

arise out of such a wreck, such a chaos of the human frame?

Picture him to yourself, gentle reader, but for one short moment, as he lay on his bed in the long weary hours by day and by night, week after week, month after month; the familiar objects of "home" and its surroundings ever present to his senses, and yet, in so far as any active participation in its duties or its pleasures, all as a sealed book, an utter blank! Unconscious that he possessed within himself a something, which men call genius, to be afterwards developed in an untold degree. Without a liberal, or at least an extended education, which, if he had had, might have afforded glimpses of resource far beyond anything he could hope to enjoy.

And yet out of this human wreck, out of this seeming chaos, that something did spring forth so attractive in itself, so redeeming in its tendency, such a complete exemplification of the triumph of mind over matter, of soul over body, that one is filled with an astonishment calculated to shake

belief, even whilst possessing the best evidence that Carter's history is perfectly and undeniably true.

About six weeks after the accident, John Carter and his wife were received into his father's house, for the sake of economy, and that his friends might the better attend upon him, and at the end of several weeks he told his father that he had suffered very much in spirit for some time past, having endured a sharp conflict, but that now it was over, and the battle he believed was won. Doubtless it cost him something to put away old thoughts, and get rid of old companions, and turn himself round resolutely in quest of true riches; but his energy of character remained, and taking only a new direction, carried him forward towards the accomplishment of the great purpose of his being. The grace of God wrought in him a strong desire after forgiveness and peace, and ultimately crowned his efforts (we may well hope) with success. When he began to see clearly his own faults, he began in faithfulness to tell his companions

in sin of theirs. This, however, as is commonly the case, was to them a signal to fall off from coming to see him. But his course was onward. From that time there is reason to believe that his heart was given to the one great work that was before him — even the salvation of his soul.

We return now to the earlier part of his long-protracted affliction, to trace the development of that extraordinary talent that was given him, and which, rightly viewed, appears to have been designed to promote the glory of God, and to furnish at once a new employment and a reasonable recreation for his servant.

The entire loss of the use of all his limbs cut off the sufferer from many of the ordinary recreations by which the tedium of long afflictions is relieved. This circumstance set him upon expedients to amuse himself, and called out the charitable contrivances of friends to afford him some pleasurable occupations. He was very fond of reading, especially biography, and one day read, in a little work which his wife had

brought home to him, of a young woman, named Elizabeth Kinning, at an asylum in Liverpool, who, having lost the use of her hands, had learned to draw with her mouth, and it occurred to him at once that he might do the same.

But we will let John Carter narrate this first dawning of a talent that was subsequently to stamp him as one of the greatest draughtsmen that ever lived, in his own words, as contained in the same letter addressed to the Rev. W. J. Dampier, from which we have before given extracts. Carter says : —

“Being fond of reading, I used to borrow books from my neighbors and others. My wife one day brought home for me a tract which gave an account of a young woman in some asylum at Liverpool, who had lost the use of her limbs, and used to amuse herself by drawing with her mouth ; the thought at once came into my mind that I might certainly do the same, and I could not rest satisfied till I made the attempt.”

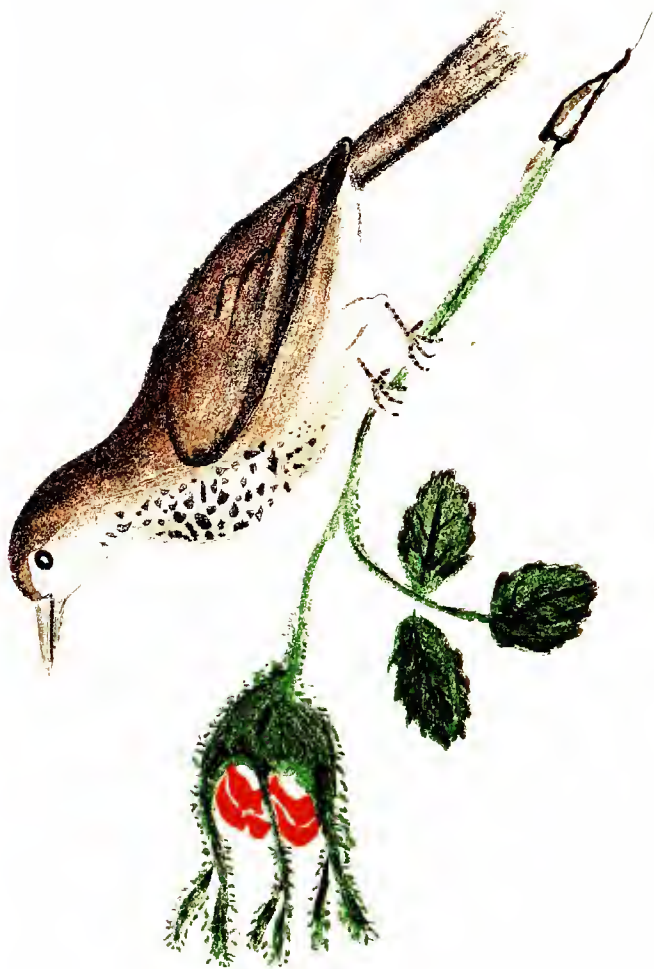
His energy was alive, and he began accordingly, drawing sometimes upon a slate,

sometimes upon pieces of paper pinned to the pillow, working first with a pencil, and afterwards with water-colors.

The first piece produced in this way was a butterfly, of which a fac-simile is here given. The insect was caught in the room, a sixpenny box of paints sent for, and the drawing made forthwith.

This gave encouragement to proceed; and here it is fit to mention that a lady, Miss Hanbury, of Holfield Grange, now Mrs. J. Bramston, then residing at Holfield Grange, in the parish of Coggeshall, whose interest in his welfare, temporal and spiritual, never ceased, was untiring in her efforts to do him service, visiting him frequently, lending him books, doing everything in her power to alleviate his sufferings, and to encourage his singular talent, that it might afford him profit as well as pleasure. A good many small drawings of birds and flowers, a fac-simile of one of which is here given, were done and sold for him amongst his many sympathizers in and around Coggeshall.





Who, contemplating the astounding results that John Carter's pencil eventually achieved, can look unmoved at these faint tracings of his first footsteps, and refrain from exclaiming, with a writer in the New York "Daily Tribune":—

"An inspiring sermon, teaching lessons of faith, and hope, and constancy; of sweetness and humility joined to an invincible courage and self-reliance, such as to read ought to put strength into the weakest heart that shrinks frightened and disheartened from its appointed lot in life!"

The difficulty, however, soon came as to what *STYLE* he should adopt, whether that of colored drawings, or etchings, or line-drawings. He did, in fact, make attempts in all these various styles, but his peculiar and unrivaled talent settled upon line-drawing chiefly, and certainly his best and most exquisite works are in this style. His very first work in this kind was a Syrian goat, which is here given. This illustration is a perfect fac-simile of the original; it is engraved on copper, by the celebrated

W. Holl, of 10 Cornwall Terrace, Camden Town, London, who, in a letter to the Rev. W. J. Dampier on the subject of four engravings he had just made from Carter's drawings (of which the Syrian goat was one), says :—

“I inclose the four engravings. You will perceive every care has been taken to render them as perfect a fac-simile as possible.

“W. HOLL.”

This important fact is attested by the eminent artist, George Richmond, of 10 York Street, Portman Square, London, as follows :—

“I never saw more faithful representations of any drawings, than the engravings of Holl from John Carter.

“GEO. RICHMOND.”

It will, we think, be interesting to our readers, if an article which appeared in the “Saturday Magazine,” No. 519, of 1st August, 1840, published by J. W. Parker, West Strand, London, is here given *in extenso*, as it was written and published just *three*

Syrian Goat



years after John Carter had met with his accident, and BEFORE his later works had stamped him as a great master in art; though it is worthy of note, that even at this early period of his career, he gave strong promise of much that he afterwards achieved.

The article, *verbatim et literatim*, runs thus : —

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF JOHN CARTER.

“In the year 1589 there was published by Henry Goltzius, a German engraver, a series of twelve heads, representing the Twelve Apostles, under each of which is a sentence of the Creed, in conformity with the well-known tradition that that compendium of the Christian faith was the joint work of those first missionaries of the gospel; each of whom is said to have contributed a certain portion. This tradition is not of a very early date, and the story is, on many accounts, incredible; although the substance of that Creed may well endure the strictest scrutiny, its articles being ‘gathered together,’ according to the words of St. Austin, ‘from those places where they lie scattered throughout the Holy Scriptures.’ There is nothing remarkable in relation to this set of heads; but the circumstances under which one of the series (the head of St. John) has recently been copied, and that, too,

in a most beautiful manner, are well worthy of attention.

"Three years ago the individual by whom the copy was executed had never so much as thought of making a drawing. Many persons will be ready to think that there is nothing very wonderful in this, for that much may be done in three years ; but they will probably alter their opinion before they come to the end of our narrative.

"John Carter, the person of whom we are speaking, is the son of a laboring man, who is still living at Coggeshall, in Essex. After having been taught to read and write at the parish school, he was put to learn the trade of silk-weaving, and, although not a steady lad, was esteemed in due time to be a good workman. At the age of twenty he married ; but, unhappily, he did not give up his former bad habits, being frequently intoxicated, and very rarely seen at church.

"One Saturday night, in May, 1836, he had been drinking at the ale-house with seven or eight other young men, as much inclined for mischief as himself, when one of them proposed that the whole party should go up to the plantations of Osgood Hanbury, Esq., of Holfield Grange, to rob the rooks' nests. In this reprehensible employment they were engaged until near one o'clock on Sunday morning, when Carter, having climbed to the top of a fir-tree, attempted to reach another, which, in the darkness of the night, appeared to be within his reach ; he jumped, missed his hold, and fell to the ground. Happily for him the

branches broke his fall, or he would, in all probability, have been killed on the spot — the height of the tree being not less than forty feet. His companions carried him home in a state of insensibility, and apparently dying, to his wife, who had gone to bed ill, and, as usual, in no small anxiety about her unsteady husband. Hearing the noise below, and thinking that he had come home in liquor, she came down, and, as may be easily imagined, was overcome by the spectacle that presented itself. He was lying on a hurdle, and one of his companions was sitting by his side, the others having left him. Everything was done for him that could be done ; but it was late on Sunday afternoon before he recovered his senses ; and then his first thought was that he should certainly die, and should have to render up his account to his offended Maker, with all his sins upon his head. A week of intense pain, without a moment's sleep, served to increase his alarm ; but by degrees his bodily sufferings were mitigated, and there appeared to be some *raison* to think that his life might be spared, at all events, for a time. As the inflammation and swelling subsided, it became evident that he had sustained some injury in the spine, which had entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs, and, indeed, of every muscle of his body, and of all sensation below the collar-bone. For twelve months he lay motionless upon his bed ; but the time was not lost ; for, by the blessing of God upon the endeavors of the worthy and benevolent clergyman of the parish, aided by some excellent neighbors, and a supply of

good books, he was brought to a sense of the sinfulness of his former life, and to an earnest, and, as is hoped, effectual inquiry after the means of pardon and salvation, through repentance, faith, and renewed obedience. He is now a devout attendant at church, and at the holy communion, whenever the weather is such as to allow of his being drawn thither on a sort of couch upon which he is moved.

“About a year after the accident, his wife saw, and borrowed for him, a little book which gave an account of a young woman, who, having lost the use of her hands, amused herself by drawing with her mouth ; he determined to try to do the same. At first he copied butterflies in water-colors, but soon adopted a better style. His kind patrons, the family of Mr. Hanbury, supplied him with Bewick’s ‘Birds,’ and other engravings of the same description, and he soon learned to sketch them very accurately with a camel’s-hair brush and India ink. Inclined towards the right side, with his paper and copy fixed to his drawing desk, which is placed in a convenient position on the bed, almost perpendicularly before his face, and with his hair pencil between his teeth, he can produce, by means of the motion of his neck, assisted occasionally by the lips, the most delicate and beautifully-turned strokes. He has just begun to try a new subject, the human face ; and his first attempt in this way was the head of St. John, of which we have been speaking.

“As far as regards his bodily state, there has been no appearance of any alteration lately ; and if he should

be spared for any length of time, and should pursue his present course of improvement, he may one day become no mean proficient in an art which seems to require, as an essential qualification, that which he does not in the smallest degree possess—the free use of the hands. He lives upon a parish allowance; his weak state of health preventing any further application to his new employment than is sufficient to procure for him some few additional comforts, or, as they may be well called in his case, necessities.”

“[We were desirous of presenting our readers with an engraving from Carter’s copy of the old print, but found it impossible to convey, by means of stereotype plates and the steam-press, any correct idea of the elaborate and minute execution, and the singularly soft and beautiful effect of his camel-hair pencil drawing.]”

His skill increased rapidly enough; and a very steady improvement might be observed in his performances, from the butterfly first noticed to the date (1843) when he sent his offering of a drawing to the late Queen Dowager of England, through the present Bishop of London.

His power and taste, however, as an artist, will be best seen in the unfinished head, done professedly in imitation of Rembrandt’s method of work, shown on the opposite page. The plate from which this

illustration is given was carefully engraved by Holl (it is one of the four alluded to by him in his letter to the Rev. W. J. Dampier), and is a faithful representation of the original study from which Carter subsequently drew his exquisite picture now in the possession of the Queen of England.

The way in which he executed his work must now be stated. The posture in which he drew was lying a little on the right side, with the head a little raised by pillows. A small, light desk of deal, made under his own directions, was adjusted for him (as shown in the frontispiece); on this desk his drawing paper was fastened with large, flat, brass-headed pins, such as artists and architects use for the same purpose. He never drew but in bed. He first sketched in his subject with a lead pencil, sometimes as little as four inches in length, which he held between his teeth as firmly as if in a vise. This done, a little saucer of Indian ink was prepared, and the brush was moistened by his attendant, and placed in his mouth, when, by a curious muscular action of his lips and

tongue, he would twirl the brush round with great velocity, until he had thrown off all superfluous ink and brought it to a very fine point. He then held it fast between his jaw-teeth, and by the motion of the head produced the most accurate and delicate strokes. He was accustomed to work with very fine hair pencils (some almost as fine as needle-points), about six inches long, which, by bringing the work so near to his eye, would manifestly much enhance the difficulty of the operation ; and considering how quick the evaporation would be in summer time, and how impossible it was, from his recumbent position, for the colors to flow to the point of the brush, when actually touching on his work, it will easily be imagined how troublesome an operation it must have been to him, and how much incessant assistance he required ; for the brush was always taken from his mouth, replenished, and replaced by his constant, watchful, and unwearied attendant.

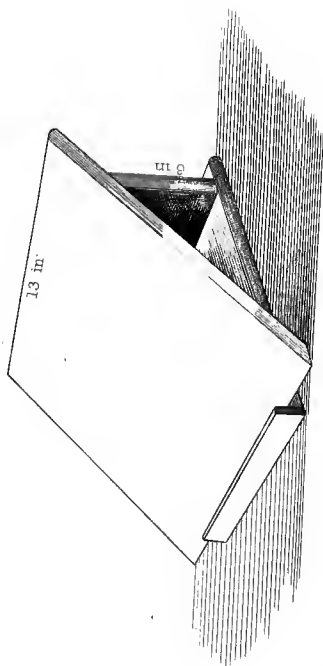
A slight sketch of the desk on which he commonly worked, and of the brush and

pencil he employed, is here given in the belief that it will be found interesting.

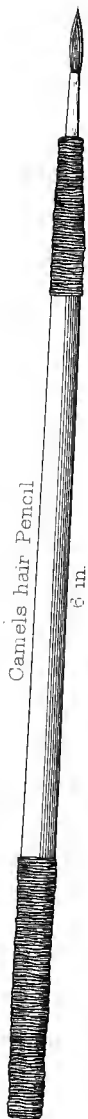
At times, in difficult subjects, he would have his paper divided by pencil lines into squares, after the manner of engravers with plates, but this was seldom done except with the larger of his works; and even then Carter was commonly dissatisfied with the want of precision in the ruled squares, they not appearing accurate, generally speaking, under the keen scrutiny of his microscopic vision; but without this aid the precision of his drawing was perfectly marvelous. The skill with which he sketched in a difficult figure in pencil was, perhaps, even more astounding than that with which he finished it in Indian ink.

In the progressive development of Carter's character, two traits showed themselves preëminently conspicuous above and beyond all others—"a love of truth," and "a singular patience and persistence in accomplishing his purposes." This latter gift stood him, no doubt, in good stead of that otherwise needful education and preparation

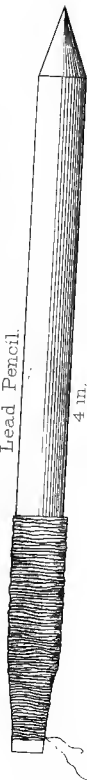
Desk



Camels hair Pencil



Lead Pencil



imperative to mature the character of a true artist, whilst "a love of truth," beyond all other qualifications that one thing needful to every one who desires to excel, in art especially, he possessed in an eminent degree; and doubtless it *was* that "love of truth" which aided his efforts so wonderfully in perfecting all that he undertook. In his works Carter ever aimed at doing his very best, that is to say he earnestly, patiently, and conscientiously labored to develop through the expression which his pencil gave the truth, as he realized it in his own mind, of whatever subject he was engaged on; and his was a mind that seemed fitted and formed in a high degree for the reception of truthful impressions.

He could enlarge or reduce with perfect success. A single example may serve to demonstrate this wondrous power of perception and delineation, no less than his "love of truth" as exemplified through his works. A flower or insect, say a daisy just plucked or a butterfly just caught, would be brought to him for a study; he

would proceed to paint in water-colors a perfect fac-simile, so absolutely perfect that no difference appeared to exist between the original and the copy either as regards size, or, indeed, in any other particular. He would then execute from his own drawing the same subject in different sizes ; that is to say, he would make two or three copies each one so many times *larger*, and say two or three copies each so many times *smaller* than the original already drawn from nature, every copy on a separately different scale, yet each in perfect proportion, in perfect accord, and so exact in detail, withal, that the aid of a magnifying glass would fail to detect that any one of those half dozen little gems differed from another, size excepted, in the slightest degree ; each being, *per se*, a complete exhibition of harmony and truthfulness.

The exquisite grace and beautiful drawing of the "Virgin and Child," after Albert Dürer, as shown in the annexed illustration, must strike every draughtsman forcibly. The original drawing of this by Carter is in



plane surface, by some unusual, combined, and difficult action from which he shrunk—not perhaps knowing exactly what the difficulty was, but simply feeling that it was great, and not compensated for even by success. Chalk-drawing he therefore abandoned, once for all, and betook himself again to line-drawing with sable pencil in Indian ink, a style in which he was destined to become not only a great master but really *unapproachable*.

He took several likenesses of intimate friends with marked success, in pencil and in black profile, especially those of Miss Hanbury, his father, and himself; this style, however, he pursued but as a source of recreation between intervals of more serious study on line-drawing, upon the perfecting of which all his genius and taste seemed to centre.

Mr. George Richmond, the artist previously spoken of in these pages, knew Carter well, and encouraged him to draw on blocks for cutting, but he only did one or two; the labor was very great to him to



see his work stroke by stroke plainly on the block as he progressed, yet this was indispensable ; besides, he required, for the same obvious reason, *white* ground to work on. The sitting figure of our Lord, in woodcut, after Albert Dürer, is here given as having been drawn by Carter himself upon the block.

John Carter was singularly humble in the possession of his talent, thankfully receiving any hints which persons acquainted with drawing were inclined to offer. Comparatively few have seen him at his work, beyond the members of his own family, and those who, like the Hanburys of Holfield Grange, the Whites of Highfields, the Rev. W. J. Dampier, or his constant medical attendant, Dr. James Stewart Nott, knew him very intimately indeed, and had access to him at all times. It was not that he disliked to be seen at work, but that the presence of a stranger at such times made him highly nervous, so that he dared not then trust himself with any of the more delicate portions of his subject ; for a line or a mark

once made must remain, as he rarely ventured to wash out a false stroke in Indian ink ; consequently, if visitors were introduced when he was engaged, he would usually stop or betake himself to a mass of deep shadow, where little or no mischief could come from a few tremulous strokes.

He was visited by many persons, — high dignitaries of the church, leading members of the medical profession, the most eminent artists in England, besides others distinguished alike in public as in private life, being eager claimants for admission to his cottage, — all equally interested and astonished at the almost superhuman power in the art of drawing developed in the poor, humble, paralytic John Carter. Happily he escaped without any of that weakening of the character which so commonly follows upon *petting* ; he fell not into that snare. Obliging to all, thankful to all, and ready to adopt any suggestion that was made to him, he was often a good deal tried by the tax now and then laid upon his talent and his good nature. Yet

he was never known to refuse to make any attempt, however troublesome and unsatisfactory in its results, that he was requested to undertake. This was the effect not of conceit, but of the absence of it. He was often dissatisfied with such experiments himself; but, without regard to his reputation as an artist, he labored in a docile spirit to do what was required of him. But, as was intimated before, he delighted in line-drawing, and in this he excelled.

One of his best works in this kind (and this will bear the minutest inspection) is in the possession of the Hanbury family of Holfield Grange, his great friends and patrons. Mrs. Gee of Colne House, Miss Martin Leake of Marshalls, Mrs. Unwin of Coggeshall, Mr. Bell of Selbourne, Captain Browell, R. N., the Rev. W. J. Dampier, Lady McKenzie, and Hannah Carter, his sister, are in possession of small though superb original line-drawings by Carter. The Whites of Highfields, Coggeshall, were, however, amongst his warmest admirers and friends, affording him, throughout his fourteen years

of affliction, all the aid, sympathy, and kindness it was in their power to bestow. In token of his fervent gratitude and appreciation of manifold kindnesses received at the hands of that family, he executed for Miss White that which he ever considered one of the most skillful, most elaborate, and beautiful of all his works — “Innocence;” and truly it is exquisitely beautiful. It requires, in fact, the best evidence to believe that it is anything else than the finest possible engraving on steel executed by a master’s hand. This superb work of art is drawn in pure line, yet of so soft, delicate, and minute a character as to bear the closest resemblance to the finest mezzotinto engraving. The origin of this subject arose from this incident: a kind friend showing Carter a beautiful oil-painting by Hermann Winterhalter, it so fixed his interest and admiration that he made it the model for a drawing which he designed should be, as indeed it proved, the most elaborate, the most highly finished, no less than the *largest* of all his works. It is ten and a half inches in

length, and eight and a half inches in width, which appears to have been the extreme compass within Carter's reach. The shape of the picture is an oval, and every part is finished with pre-Raphaelite minuteness. The face and half-length figure of the peasant girl holding a flower between the fingers of her right hand, representing the subject, is as beautiful as it is simple and true: nothing can exceed the limning of the face, which in sweet expression conveys the appropriateness of the title "Innocence." It is but just and right to class this work as amongst the *best* that Carter ever produced, if only upon the fact that he so judged and esteemed it himself to the day of his death. In the opinion of many, however, the question may arise whether "Innocence" equals in artistic beauty and truthfulness, Carter's wonderful work, "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," drawn expressly for Mr. John Mills (brother of the writer), son-in-law of Mr. White of Highfields, and which was finished in April, 1849, rather more than one year before Carter's death.

A critic reviews the subject and descants upon the merits of this drawing in a Boston newspaper, the "Evening Transcript," under date 23d October, 1867, as follows : —

"It represents the village Rat-catcher and his Dogs, and tells its own story at a glance. The picture may be regarded as quite perfect. The old man's face beams with a satisfied smile at the success of his operations, and his whole attitude and expression are full of the reality of life. The terriers in various positions and with divers characters are admirably rendered ; and the same may be said of all the curious and grotesque and picturesque accessories. The grouping is admirable, and the entire execution pervaded by delicacy, grace, and accuracy. The closest study of details only brings out the varied excellences of this singularly felicitous production — abounding as they do in spirit, and marked as they are by the touch of genius. Simply considered as a work of art, it might be coveted by anybody for its unquestionable merits."

The style of "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," is *open* line-drawing, that of "Innocence," *fine close* lining, to resemble mezzotinto ; each drawing is equally perfect both in style and finish.¹

¹ The writer is now in possession of both these admirable

The most fascinating and attractive work, however, without exception, both as to

works of art. That of "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs" has been exhibited during the present year at Williams & Everett's, Washington Street, Boston, Mass. ; at Schauss's, Broadway, New York ; and at Andrew Geyer & Co.'s, Free Street, Portland, Maine. Hitherto this has been the *only* work by John Carter, ever brought into this country, and, for that reason, the criticisms and opinions expressed by the public press of the three cities just named, are given in full at the close of this Memoir, so as to afford parties at a distance, who may not have had the opportunity of judging for themselves, a guide by which to form a right and due comprehension and appreciation of the worth and marvelous beauty of Carter's drawing. A photograph of "The Rat-catcher" was taken by Mr. H. G. Smith, at the Studio Building, Tremont Street, Boston, with marked success, which has been published by the writer. Carter's works photograph exceedingly well, arising from the fact that they are so clearly and exquisitely delineated. It is in contemplation to exhibit "Innocence," as also to publish, either by engraving or photograph, copies of that work. A preference has been given to photography over engraving, in connection with works by John Carter, because parties in the country desiring to possess copies of Carter's drawings, on account of the great curiosity surrounding them, might, probably would, in the absence of opportunity to compare original with copy, esteem an *engraving* to be but a flattering likeness, worked up and made into a beautiful picture by the talent, skill, and taste of the engraver ; whereas a *photograph* is necessarily a fac-simile, so far as it goes, too often doing but small justice to works of art. Photography will at least be acquitted of ever *adding* to the beauty, or brightening the good effect of originals which it copies. The writer is also the owner of two other drawings by Carter, which, though small, as the majority of Carter's works are, will yet be found to be

thought, expression, and execution, that Carter's pencil ever produced, is an exquisite gem illustrative of the first passage in the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven." The attitude of the two children at devotion is so natural, the expression of their faces (likenesses) so sweet, so simple, and so holy, that whilst it commands our highest admiration for the beautiful thought and feeling which pervades it, we are no less entranced at the marvelous touches of the pencil which gave the effect.

This work, in pure line-drawing, was left to his sister, Hannah Carter, in whose possession it remains, and by whom it is highly and justly valued.

To convey a concise idea of Carter's extraordinary powers as a draughtsman, two illustrations are here given, being photographs from his original drawings, "The

absolutely perfect. One, "The Head of a Fox," the other, "The Sick Horse," photographs of which (taken by Mr. H. G. Smith, Studio Building, Tremont Street, Boston), from the originals, are inserted in this work.

F. J. MILLS.

Lynn, Mass., September, 1868.





Sick Horse," and "The Head of a Fox." A glance only at these will be sufficient to demonstrate no less the vigor than the beauty and delicacy with which Carter could wield his brush. "The Sick Horse" is a picture at once truthfully and feelingly exhibited in a series of the softest and finest strokes that can be imagined; whilst the "Fox's Head," not a whit less truthful, but in a style at once sharp, vigorous, and bold, is aptly in keeping with the subject. It would be difficult to find better contrasting specimens of Carter's powers as artist and draughtsman than are here presented.

John Carter's peculiar talent for drawing is noticed in a letter written by George Richmond, an eminent English artist, to the Rev. W. J. Dampier, on hearing of Carter's death, which took place on the 2d June, 1850. Mr. Richmond took a particular interest in Carter, and personally assisted in endeavoring to bring his remarkable gift to bear upon a profitable multiplication of his works by wood-cuts.

Extracts from this letter are as follows:—

"10 YORK STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE,
June 12, 1850.

"MY DEAR SIR, — I heard, a few days ago, with great regret of the death of poor Carter ; I could not but feel great interest in him, both as a man and as an artist.

"I wish, while it was possible to have done so, I had made a sketch of his own (as it appeared to me) most beautiful face, for that would have interested both you and many others.

"His powers were extraordinary — I mean, would have been extraordinary in one possessing hands to execute his thought with ; but to see him, with his short pencil between his lips, executing, with the greatest precision, and skill, intricate forms, and describing difficult curves, filled me with wonder and admiration.

"I wish I knew more of his works, for I would then give you my opinion of them artistically, but I feel sure that *ordinary rules of criticism should not be applied to him*, who fought at such disadvantage, and triumphed so nobly.

"GEORGE RICHMOND.

"The REV. W. J. DAMPIER, *Coggeshall Vicarage.*"

It is a matter, doubtless, of great regret, that so eminent an artist and portrait painter as Mr. Richmond, did not take a sketch of, as he truly expresses it, Carter's "most beautiful face." Happily, however, the Rev. W.

J. Dampier has supplied this want in some measure by an admirable likeness from which the engraving by W. Holl, forming the frontispiece for this Memoir, is taken. It is a truthful portrait, descriptive in every way of Carter's highly intelligent, thoughtful, and refined cast of countenance. It was hardly possible for anybody to look on his face as the writer saw him in June, 1849, without being forcibly impressed not only with his interesting and beautiful features, but with an expression which seemed to light up, as it were, a countenance indicative of the highest cast of thought and feeling.

Mr. Richmond refers to his remembrance of Carter's strikingly beautiful and intellectual cast of countenance, no less than to the wonderful control which he possessed over his little camel's-hair pencil, in perhaps even more forcible terms, in a letter, of very recent date to the Rev. W. J. Dampier, as follows:—

“CHEVITON VILLA, FOLKESTONE, KENT, }
27th August, 1868. }

“MY DEAR SIR, — I perfectly remember ‘John

Carter,' and have seen him at work with his little camel's-hair pencil of two or three inches in length held in his mouth, which he used (if I may be allowed the expression) with wonderful dexterity. When not at work he used to roll it about with his lips as I have seen a countryman do a sprig or a straw.

"The first time I saw him, I was taken to his cottage by the excellent Rector of 'Stisted,' the Rev. Charles Forster, and the impression of that visit I shall never lose ; for the contrast of the utterly helpless body of the man with the bright and beaming expression of his face, which only a peaceful and clear spirit could raise, was a sight to do one good.

"It was '*as it had been the face of an angel,*' and I always think of him in connection with this passage.

"I am glad that through your very interesting Memoir many should become acquainted with John Carter.

"Believe me,

"My dear sir,

"Very truly yours,

"GEORGE RICHMOND.

"The REV. W. J. DAMPIER."

Till November, 1841, he was attended upon by Lucy Carter, his wife, but in that month she, having suffered severely for some time from a disease of the heart, was taken from him. His sister, Hannah Carter, then



succeeded to the care of her afflicted brother, and became his constant attendant, ministering with exemplary tenderness and affection to all his necessities to the last.

It ought to be mentioned in this Memoir, that the subject of it was possessed, not only of the power of drawing beautifully in the way already described, but also of that of writing well and most legibly *with pen and ink*. One of his letters to his pastor, the Rev. W. J. Dampier, which is singularly well written, and by the same process by which he was accustomed to draw, is *here given in lithograph*. This, as containing his own account, in short terms, of his early life and habits, and the manner in which he was brought to his knowledge and employment of the gift bestowed upon him, for which he was so remarkable, will be found deeply interesting ; here, in brief and artless language, he tells his own story, which, if rightly viewed, is hardly more wonderful than the lesson it enforces is pertinent and instructive. This is the same letter from which former extracts were

given. The calligraphy betrays the difference between his matchless lines when drawn with a fine, *soft*, sable brush, yielding to every movement of his exquisitely delicate touch, and the *hard*, unyielding nib of the pen ; and will the better serve to explain perhaps, the reason of his so quickly abandoning the study of chalk-drawing because of its increased mechanical difficulty.

It has been thought well to insert here a copy of a paragraph which appeared in an issue of " The Lancet " (the leading medical journal in England) for July 19, 1856, under an article headed, —

DEATHS FROM FRACTURES AND OTHER INJURIES OF THE CERVICAL VERTEBRÆ.

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" Of the seven patients whose cases are above detailed, one lived only five hours and a half after the accident ; three died in little more than twenty-four hours ; one lived for two days ; another for six days, and another for twenty-seven days afterwards. In a case detailed by Dr. Eade (' The Lancet ' for 1855, vol. ii. p. 520), the patient lived for nearly four months.

But by far the most remarkable case of this description with which we are acquainted is narrated in a Memoir of one John Carter, of Coggeshall, in Essex,¹ who lived for *fourteen years* after the injuries which deprived his limbs of motion and sensation. Carter, at the age of twenty-one years, in 1836, slipped from a tree at the height of about forty feet from the ground, and fell to the earth upon his back. He was taken up senseless, and moved none of his limbs afterwards. Muscular power in the neck and head was, however, retained, and, it is added, a slight power of motion in the chest and left shoulder. The brain appeared to have suffered no injury from the fall. His mental faculties remained unimpaired during the rest of his life, and he partially supported himself by drawing, by means of a pencil placed between his teeth, upon paper adjusted for the purpose upon appropriate machinery. Some of his drawings made in this way, copies of which are given in his Memoir, have singular excellence, and one is said to be in the possession of Her Majesty. His death was occasioned by pulmonary disease, accelerated by his being overturned with a small chaise in which he was being drawn. At a post-mortem examination, the fifth, sixth, and seventh cervical vertebræ were found thrust out into an arch, and the seventh was dislocated so as to press upon the spinal cord. We learn that a considerable quantity of

¹ *Memoir of John Carter.* By William James Dampier, Vicar of Coggeshall. London, Parker, 1850. 12mo, pp. 44.

extravasated blood was found in the immediate region of this dislocation, which effusion was probably a result of his last fall ; but as the Memoir is written by a non-professional gentleman, we have no more precise account of the anatomical peculiarities of the injuries sustained than that just given."

A further reference to this remarkable case will be found in the same medical journal, "The Lancet," for 27th October, 1860, part 2, p. 403, in "A Course of Lectures on Pain and the Therapeutic Influence of Mechanical and Physiological Rest in Accidents and Surgical Diseases, delivered in the theatre of the Royal College of Surgeons," London, by John Hilton, Esq., F. R. S., Surgeon to Guy's Hospital, and Professor of Anatomy and Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons. Mr. Hilton entitles it a "Case of Injury to fifth, sixth, and seventh Cervical Vertebrae ; Paralysis and Loss of Sensation in the Upper and Lower Extremities ; the patient lived fourteen years and then died from another accident." And thereupon proceeds to say,—

"Only a short portion of my appointed time remains

to me to-day, and I will detail to you a case of great interest in two or three respects. John Carter, aged twenty-one, had an injury to the fifth, sixth, and seventh cervical vertebræ, producing paralysis of both legs, and both arms. He lived fourteen years, and then died from the effects of another accident. The particulars of this case, as far as I know them at present, are these: The accident occurred in May, 1836. The man's age was twenty-one. He fell from a tree, forty feet, upon his back, or probably his head. He was senseless, unconscious, and paralyzed below his neck. He was carried home upon a hurdle, and was seen by the late Mr. Whitmore, of Coggeshall, Essex, two hours after the accident; and he, some years ago, wrote me this note:—

“‘It was in May, 1836, that I (Mr. Whitmore) was called up, on a Sunday morning, between four and five o'clock, to John Carter, who had fallen from a tree, when in the pursuit of young rooks. When I saw him he was perfectly insensible and motionless; cold, and breathing imperfectly; with a pulse weak in the extreme; and he appeared to have sustained some fatal injury to the brain or spinal column, from which there was scarcely a hope of his recovery. The accident had then occurred about two hours, I believe. I ordered hot flannels, and other means to be used to restore warmth to the body, and to bring about reaction. In the course of the day reaction was established, and there were signs of returning consciousness, evidenced by a groan when aroused. Towards even-

ing the pulse was so far reëstablished as to warrant venesection. In the course of the night he became more conscious, and was sufficiently sensible next day to enable me to ascertain that the serious injury was high up the spine. There was a perfect absence of muscular power, and of sensibility of the skin throughout the body, except in the head and upper part of the neck. The muscular power of the neck was lost also for several days ; but after cupping the back of the neck, and using proper remedies, a capability of moving the head gradually returned. The bladder was paralyzed, and the catheter required. There was no appearance externally to indicate the precise situation of the injury as to the vertebræ—not the slightest irregularity ; but the general symptoms and circumstances rendered it pretty certain that serious damage had been sustained by the fifth or sixth cervical vertebræ. After some weeks, a certain amount of motive power was restored to the head and neck, and sensibility to the same extent ; but the rest of the body (as long as I attended the case) remained perfectly paralyzed and insensible. I left Coggeshall to go on the Continent, and after five years' absence, on my return was surprised to find the patient Carter still living, and in much the same condition as when I left England.'

"I, myself (Mr. Hilton then proceeds to say), saw this man several times during the latter period of his life, and these are the few notes I took of his case at the time : —

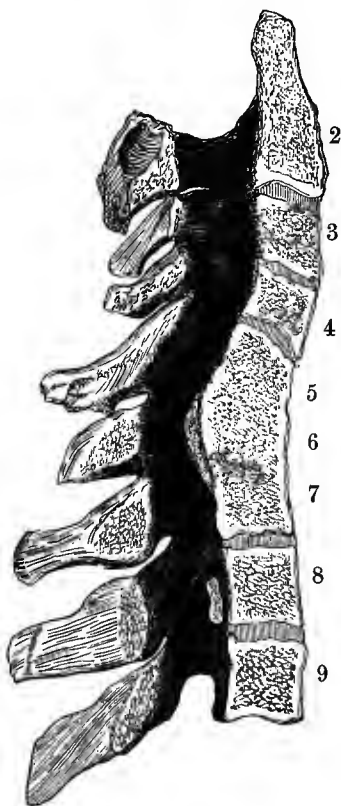
" " Perfect loss of sensation in the lower extremities

and in the upper extremities, except indistinct sensibility on the left side as far as the elbow. Muscles of the left shoulder more developed than the right. Feels distinctly on the left shoulder, and indistinctly on the right shoulder. The left forearm is now flexed ; the thumb is turned into the palm of the hand, and the fingers are bent over it. Right arm nearly straight ; the little and fourth fingers flexed. The hands remained open until about six months after the accident, when contraction commenced. No contraction in the feet, except that the right foot is a little flexed. Legs jump a little during the efforts at defecation, and sometimes suddenly without obvious cause. Arms jump, especially the right, during micturition. Bowels not open without medicine (*senna*). On some days has peculiar sensations of chillness, becomes pale, and then feels hot and flushed both at defecation and micturition. The more constipated the bowels, the more of these peculiar sensations are experienced. Feels a distinct pain in the bowels occasionally, and now and then an aching in the loins. When sick, vomits with great difficulty. Spine : nothing abnormal to be felt. No costal movements during respiration ; no hiccough. One good meal of meat daily.'

"This case forms a great encouragement to give every possible care and attention to the treatment of injuries of the spine, with the hope of obtaining the same happy result as occurred in this instance. According to the statistical averages, he ought to have died within a few days after the accident ; but repudi-

ating any such illegitimate duty, he lived during fourteen years, and his death occurred from another accident. Whilst being dragged about in a little four-wheel cart by a boy, he was turned over, and as he could not put out his hands to save himself, he fell with great violence to the ground ; this led to some chest affection, which occasioned his death in a few days. His friends would not allow his surgeon, Mr. Nott of Coggeshall, to examine the body, and only upon a very special application, was he permitted to take out the portion of spine which I now send round, just before the removal of the body from the house for the purpose of immediate interment, otherwise we should never have known what kind of accident this patient had experienced.

“ In the diagram, or large drawing before you, made from the preparation itself, the bodies and arches of the fifth, sixth, and seventh cervical vertebræ, are seen blended together by bone ; the body of the sixth vertebra is displaced, and projects backwards into the vertebral canal, and no doubt was the cause of the paralysis. It is worthy of notice that the intervertebral substances have disappeared ; but their outlines are still marked, and their places occupied by bone. The thin, articular laminæ of bone usually interposed between the intervertebral substances and the bodies of the vertebræ are still visible, although the intervertebral substance is gone. Every one must admire the perfect and level union by new bone which has taken place at the fore part of the spine ; and if nature



Represents a vertical section of J. Carter's spine, including the six *lower* cervical vertebræ, and the first and second dorsal vertebræ, marked 8 and 9. The 5th, 6th, and 7th cervical vertebræ are seen consolidated by bone, both at their bodies and their arches.

could have been as effective in the other direction — that is, towards the vertebral canal — this patient might have lived and perfectly recovered.”

The remarkable physical phenomenon in Carter's case may be thus described: The nature of the original injury appears, from examination, to have been a disturbance of the fifth, sixth, and seventh of the cervical vertebræ, which were thrust out into an arch, and the dislocation of the seventh vertebra, by which the column of spinal marrow, without being severed, or perhaps even lacerated, suffered severe compression, such as to deaden completely the nerves of motion and sensation, yet not such as to destroy, or even damage the nerves connected with the respiratory and digestive systems ; for the functions of life were carried on for a course of years with but very little occasional medical assistance ; in fact, marvelous as it may sound to common ears, the injury was of that peculiar nature, that the man may be truly said to *have lived fourteen years with a broken neck*, and to have acquired during that time the singular power

of executing the very finest line-drawings in existence, by the motion of the head, in the manner particularly described in a former part of this Memoir.

Carter experienced no sensation of pain in his body or limbs. He might be severely pinched, even till the skin was discolored, without consciousness of pain in any degree ; but he experienced considerable advantage and comfort, when his appetite for food was sluggish, or when he was suffering from exhaustion, in having his legs gently shaken to stimulate the action of his system.

There is not, perhaps, on record, a more extensive paralysis of the human frame than this of John Carter ; and the perfect possession of the faculties of the mind, and the fair performance of all the functions of life, under these circumstances, and for a period of fourteen years, together with the successful exercise of an extraordinary mechanical power, immediately connected with the seat of the injury, will be an interesting fact to all students of physiology.

But there are, also, other considerations

arising out of this case that cannot fail to strike the attention of the philosophical moralist. It is one of those examples (especially valuable in such times as these) which go far to show that the soul is a spiritual unit, and not the mere concord of numerous animal faculties; for all the moral powers remained unimpaired — nay, were refined and exalted by the loss of everything short of life.

Surely the fact that John Carter for fourteen years retained and even increased all his powers of mind and spirit, even when his body was well-nigh dead, may help to show how reasonable, as well as true, it is to believe that the life of the spirit of man depends not upon the life of his body.

During the winter months John Carter was a close prisoner at home, amusing and improving himself by reading; for the light in winter time was seldom strong enough to enable him to follow his drawing with satisfaction, or for any length of time. Occasional conversations with friends who visited him, the reading of good and useful books,

and his own regular devotional exercises, which consisted chiefly in mental prayer, and the reading of the Holy Scriptures, formed his chief occupation and delight in the winter; but when the summer sun shone into his window, he began to feel that he had been shut up, and longed earnestly to be out again, that he might enjoy the beauties of nature, of which he was very observant, and for which he had a keen relish; in this respect he was a true-born, genuine artist; but above all, that he might enjoy the pleasures of God's House, and take his accustomed place at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. It was an interesting and affecting sight when he was brought into the parish church at Coggeshall, upon his couch (which was the body of his little carriage so constructed as to take on and off) and laid in the chancel, where he could participate with ease in the sacred ordinances of religion. It was delightful and improving to look upon the fine, intelligent countenance of this remarkable paralytic, in whom religion seemed to have wrought an un-

earthly calm, and that humble, tranquil, settled hope, which so strongly characterizes devout followers of Christ.

John Carter had been a member of the Episcopal Church of England, but he had neglected the opportunity of being confirmed at the customary age. His habits, indeed, at that time, would have been an effectual hindrance had he offered himself a candidate. When, however, the Bishop of London (in whose diocese Coggeshall then was) confirmed for the first time in Coggeshall Church, Carter earnestly desired the imposition of the bishop's hands. Accordingly, in the summer of 1843, he received Confirmation, and it was an interesting ceremony, as well to the beholders as to himself, and not the least so to the chief pastor of the flock, when he was called upon to go to the place in the church where the poor man lay motionless on his couch, to lay his hands upon him, "to certify him of God's favor and goodness towards him."

In the summer time he would often be brought into church on week-days, to join

in the daily prayers, and was at all times a worthy example of reverence and calm devotion.

For some years previous to his decease, Carter was sensible of an increasing weakness of the chest. His winter cold and cough lasted longer than usual, and more caution became needful in planning for his going out, either to take his airings or to go to church.

Scarcely had he begun to enjoy his little rides about the neighborhood of Coggeshall, in the summer of 1850, than an awkward and distressing accident occurred to shorten his days on earth. He was being drawn about on the 21st May, but thinking to give his sister, Hannah Carter, who was his constant, watchful companion, the full enjoyment of a favorite walk on a beautiful day, he insisted upon her leaving him, and sent her home across the fields, while he was drawn on the road by a little boy whom he usually engaged for the purpose, and a relative who had come to visit him in the Whitsun holidays. He watched his sister, anx-

iously, as long as he could, to see that she was not alarmed at some cattle which were pastured in the field she was crossing; and in the course of a few minutes, in consequence of the boy, who was guiding the carriage down a slight descent, tripping and losing his power, the carriage was thrown over, and Carter was seriously bruised and shaken by the fall. This severe shock to his whole system, it is supposed, gave an advantage to his old complaint, which found him this time without sufficient stamina to rally. A considerable quantity of extravasated blood in the immediate region of the original dislocation, leads plainly to the idea just expressed, that the fall from his chaise, although not the immediate cause of his death, which was from pulmonary affection, very much accelerated it.

It will not fail to strike the reader as somewhat remarkable, that a fall should have been the occasion of his long affliction; and that after fourteen years of peril, in which, in the most utter helplessness, he had had to trust himself in many different

hands, a fall should at last have contributed to his release. How great a work had been wrought between the two accidents! And this is the consolation.

The soreness of the bruises passed away, and for a time, Carter felt as if he were recovering from the effects of his fall. But the great mischief was within, and he soon became sensibly worse. On the evening of Sunday, the second of June, of that year, 1850, he expressed to the Rev. W. J. Dampier a persuasion that he should not continue long on earth; reassured him of his deep sense of past sin, but of his humble belief that his iniquities were pardoned and put away for the merits' sake of his Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Still, the thought of the past, and the thought of sin only, was a pain and trial to his spirit. His repentance, however, had been sincere, his faith was firm, and his hope was fixed; and therefore, he had the peace of the penitent. He had received the holy communion at church on the Whitsunday, two days before his accident; and he should have been strengthened

and comforted yet once again on the Monday (3d June), but that he had run out his little span before it was quite expected, and on Sunday evening (2d June), about nine o'clock, he was taken to his rest. He rests, it is believed, in peace. His latter days furnish a notable example of the soul's triumph amid the body's wreck.

Himself a singular instance of patience, he prayed for patience ; but when the period of his departure was close at hand, and he found himself entering into his last struggle, he prayed earnestly for help in the awful hour of death. His dying words, which have been carefully preserved with fond remembrance by his family, were as follows : —

“ O Lord, have mercy on me ! Help me through this misery, and lead me in the way everlasting. Help me through the valley of death, and pardon and forgive all my sins ; and receive me into thy heavenly kingdom, O Lord, I beseech thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. O Lord Jesus, make haste to help me.”

Thus he fell asleep, leaving to his aged parents and affectionate sister a good hope that his prayer was heard.

To sum up, in a few words, the character of this remarkable person. He was intelligent, inquiring, thoughtful, and refined ; obliging, humble, grateful for the least kindnesses, which he would recompense sometimes with good words, sometimes with little presents of his drawings ; steadfast of purpose, remarkable for his self-possession, notwithstanding a somewhat sensitive nature, and a high degree of nervousness ; charitable, reverent, and devout ; but perhaps the most striking features in his character were a love of truth, a singular patience in enduring trials and a persistence in accomplishing his purposes. This energy of character may be traced more or less distinctly throughout his life, as far as the writer has been able to present it in this brief memoir ; and one lesson to be learned from the case of this interesting person is, that many a character which appears daring and mischievous in a high degree, has in it those elements which, when brought under the dominion of grace, make it proportionably strong in all that is great and good.

The writer cannot close these pages without adding one or two extracts from an article which appeared in the New York "Daily Tribune" of the 14th May, 1868, on John Carter and his works; it is most ably and feelingly written — the remarks so apposite and true, that they cannot fail to recommend themselves to every thoughtful reader.

(The article itself will be found in full, amongst the Press Notices at the end of this volume.)

. . . . "An inspiring sermon, teaching lessons of faith, and hope, and constancy; of sweetness and humility joined to an invincible courage and self-reliance, such as to read ought to put strength into the weakest heart that shrinks frightened and disheartened from its appointed lot in life. Nor ought it less to shame those to whom strength and opportunity are given, but who, in the possession of all their faculties of body and mind, with sound limbs and perfect senses, still find a lion in every path, and are tripped by every straw."

. . . . "It is beside a revelation of the power of the human mind to rise above the afflictions and wounds of the flesh; to turn calamity itself into a blessing; and with a body hanging on the very verge of the grave, to conceive an impossible task, and pursue it

unwearied, uncomplaining, and undaunted, through fourteen years of death-in-life. . . .

. . . . "We see the steps by which the artist reached its height, and hail again in poor, ignorant, maimed John Carter, the glorious energy, the will, the devotion that has so often shined with divine fire in the history of man, and whose manifestation in him, allies this humble peasant boy with the noble ones of his race. It is the old story of faith that removes mountains. The sublime lesson written on the ages that there is no difficulty so great that persevering energy cannot conquer, no goal so distant nor so high that the unwearied foot and untiring heart cannot reach it. . . .

. . . . "All the good in his nature, all the seeds of manly virtue that his poor, hard, unlovely life of yesterday had kept from quickening, sprang up and made the humble cottage in which he lived as holy as the cell of any saint. A sweet patience made complaint or repining a thing unknown ; his cheerful gratitude for any help of word or deed, made helping him or teaching him a pleasure ; and when his mind, searching all about for something to busy itself with, lighted on this plan of drawing, it was wonderful to see the energy, the ingenuity, the unconquerable pluck with which this young man, who had never in all his life done more in that way than is done by hundreds of idle boys with pencils and chalk on their books and slates, set himself to work to learn to draw, and persevered until he drew like a master.

“A hymn to Poverty, a hymn to Affliction and Calamity! Riches and Health and Prosperity shut the doors of heaven, and blind us to our best selves. But these rude-seeming ministers are man’s true saviours, and to many, though to few in the same degree as to John Carter, a real life — a life of the spirit — has been made possible under circumstances most cruel and adverse, and good has come out of evil.”

NOTICES AND OPINIONS

EXPRESSED BY THE PUBLIC PRESS OF BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND
PORTLAND, HAVING REFERENCE TO THE PICTURE OF "A RAT-
CATCHER WITH HIS DOGS," DRAWN BY MEANS OF THE MOUTH,
BY JOHN CARTER.

BOSTON.

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF JOHN CARTER. — It is difficult to conceive a more extraordinary case in all its bearings, than that of the late John Carter, a native of the town of Coggeshall, in the county of Essex, England ; who, *by means of his mouth alone*, executed one or two of the most beautiful drawings in existence. The following is a correct, though brief, memoir of his life. He was the son of a common laborer at Coggeshall, in Essex, England, and, when a boy, received the very limited education which parish schools, in villages such as Coggeshall, usually afford ; that is to say, Carter acquired, in a very imperfect manner, the rudiments of reading and writing. He then became a silk-weaver by trade, which he followed up to May, 1836, when he reached the age of twenty-one years — the opening time, so to say, of his most extraordinary career !

It is essential here to remark that, at this time (May, 1836), he had, from carelessness and bad habits, all but lost the very small modicum of learning formerly gained

at the parish school ; he could neither read nor write, with anything approaching to correctness ; as to the art of *drawing or designing of any kind*, he had not the remotest idea, then, of either the one or the other.

In May, 1836, Carter, in company with one or two dissolute companions, went to Holfield, the estate of the late *Osgood Hanbury, a well known banker of London*, for the purpose of stealing young rooks from the rookery on that estate (this was at night-time) ; when he met with an accident by falling from the top of a fir-tree, not less than forty feet high.

He was carried by his comrades home to his wife in a state of insensibility. The parish doctor was sent for, who pronounced that, though not actually dead (as his companions and wife had supposed), yet that he could not linger beyond an hour or so, at most. He partially recovered, however, when it was found that he had sustained an injury in the spine, *which entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs*. From that time forward, up to the day of his death (which took place fourteen years subsequently, in 1850), he was, physically speaking, never anything other than a useless, impotent trunk ; without power of motion, or feeling in any of his limbs, or, indeed, in any part of his body, *save his head and neck*.

The powers of speech, sight, and hearing were mercifully preserved to him ; otherwise he was, to all intents and purposes, as a dead man ; utterly helpless, dependent for every want on the kind and tender care of his wife, who, to the day of her death (which took

place four years and a half after the accident), soothed and comforted him under his trial with the utmost devotion. Kind friends also came to his aid, amongst whom may be named, specially, the late Osgood Hanbury, and the members of *his* family, and the *late* Richard Meredith White, Esq., of Highfields, near Coggeshall.

About a year after the accident a lady brought a little book to Carter, containing an account of a young woman who, having lost the use of her hands, had amused herself by drawing, by the aid of her mouth ! This account interested Carter intensely. From a careless, ignorant young man, he had changed into an earnest, devout, and, all things considered, a very intelligent being. He resolved to try and do the same, in the way of learning to draw with *his mouth* !

After long and persevering efforts, he managed to copy flowers and butterflies, in water-colors, but not long afterwards adopted a better style. His method was to sketch the outline very accurately with a pencil, then shade them in the manner of a line engraving, in Indian ink, with a camel's hair brush.

From the time of the accident till his death, he reclined upon a sort of couch, capable of being drawn hither and thither, and upon which he was moved about. Resting upon this couch, he had his paper fixed to a desk, which was placed almost perpendicularly before, and in close proximity to his face. With his head inclined towards the right side, and with his hair pencil between his teeth, he produced, by means of

the motion of his neck, assisted by his lips and tongue, the most beautifully turned strokes, *rivaling, in fact, the greatest proficient in the art of drawing.*

It would, at first sight, appear incredible that the drawing which we have seen, and now more particularly allude to ("A Rat-catcher with his Dogs"), could have been done by any one *not* in possession of that very essential qualification to the production of such a work, "the use of his hands"—a qualification, however, which Carter did not in the smallest degree possess.

His method was, for his wife or sister (or whoever was in attendance upon him at the time) to fill his brush with Indian ink from a palette, and place it between his teeth, when Carter would, by a curious muscular action of his lips and tongue, twirl the brush round with a great velocity, until he had thrown off all superfluous ink and brought the brush to a *very fine point*. He would then execute the finest and most wonderfully delicate strokes by means of the action of his neck, etc., as just stated. There are but few of Carter's works extant: one is in possession of the Queen of England, another formerly belonged to the late Queen Dowager, of England, one to the late Mr. Hanbury, and one to the late Mr. White. Save these, we know of none except *this*, his *chef d'œuvre*, now before us.

His health prevented a close application to his art, though he learned to love it intensely, yet of necessity it was a work of much labor, toil, and patience to him,

a considerable space of time intervening between each stroke of his brush. All the latent energies of his mind and faculties of body (crippled and confined though they were) appear, per force, to have concentrated themselves in the sense of a wonderful sight, and a touch with the tongue so delicate as to be miraculous. From an ignorant worker in a factory, he became a great, self-taught artist, and that, too, under the most difficult and trying circumstances possible to conceive.

During his lifetime, John Carter was an object of almost as great interest to the leading members of the medical profession of Great Britain as he was to her chief artists. To the one branch of science it seemed surprising how a man in such a state of bodily infirmity should exist so long; to the other, a matter of even greater wonder how an ignorant man, totally unlearned in the very rudiments of art, dispossessed of every faculty apparently necessary for its successful prosecution, should yet, in spite of such overwhelming odds, rise, in the brief space of but a few years, to bear favorable comparison with the best living artists of his day! These facts may seem paradoxical; they are no less true. — *Daily Evening Traveller*, Oct. 5, 1867.

JOHN CARTER'S "RAT-CATCHER WITH HIS DOGS." — The little drawing by John Carter, called "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," briefly noticed in our columns the other day, and now on exhibition at Williams &

Everett's, is remarkable in more ways than one. The attention of the public has been closely drawn, in connection with this drawing, to the history of the draughtsman and to the terrible accident which made him an artist ; but his work, if this may be taken as a fair specimen of it, can stand upon its own merits, and would do credit to one who had the perfect use of his hands, as well as to one who made shift to labor with teeth, lips, and tongue alone.

The figure of the gray-haired old rat-catcher, who sits on a bank over a rat-hole, with his hat pulled down over his eyes, is admirable ; nothing, in particular, could be more expressive than its *pose* ; and all that can be seen of the face is brimful of the liveliest suggestion. But the old man's faithful assistants — four genuine wide-awake rat-terriers — are the most interesting features of the sketch. There is life in every line, from the ends of their powerful little muzzles to the extremities of their short, stiff, expectant tails. It is curious, too, to observe how their characters are discriminated in the drawing. Two are in a state of wild excitement over their rat-hole, particularly the one in the foreground, who has thrown his head and part of his body over a log to peer into the recess. These two are evidently of a nervous temperament and of a very different pattern from the stern little dog on the left, who unites high courage with caution ; while the fourth puppy of the lot seems somewhat timid and is manifestly new to the business. We may add that all the accessories of the drawing are cleverly done, and that

the work will repay a careful examination. — *Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 23, 1867.

THE VILLAGE RAT-CATCHER. — The public for the last few days have examined with much curiosity and interest, a work of art at Williams & Everett's entitled the Village Rat-catcher. It is the production of one John Carter, an Englishman, a poor, crippled silk-weaver, upon whom misfortune descended with a terrible blow. Though a drawing, it has the appearance of an engraving. The wonder of the production is that it was drawn *with the mouth*. Carter, in May, 1836, in company with dissolute companions, with whom he was then a hail-fellow, went on an expedition to steal young rooks, on the estate of Osgood Hanbury, a banker of London. He accidentally fell from a fir-tree, forty feet in height. This casualty entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs. He was, until he died in 1850, hardly more than a useless trunk, without power of motion and without feeling in any part of his body, except his head and neck. A visitor, about a year after this disabling paralysis, loaned him a book containing an account of a young woman who, losing the use of her hands, amused herself by drawing with her mouth. This account interested Carter, and he determined to try and do the same thing. After long-continued efforts he succeeded, by slow degrees, in becoming marvelously efficient. "Resting upon his couch he had his paper fixed to a desk, which was

placed almost perpendicularly before and in close proximity to his face. With his head inclined towards the right side, and with his hair pencil between his teeth, he produced, by means of the motion of his neck, assisted by his lips and tongue, the most beautifully turned strokes, rivaling, in fact, the greatest proficients in the art of drawing." His wife or sister assisted him only by filling the brush from the palette with Indian ink, and placing it between his lips, he continuing to twirl it rapidly round so as to bring it to a fine point for use. He first outlined or sketched his composition, and then filled in and shaded it after the manner of a line engraving. The present drawing has always been owned by the English gentleman who has put it, as a curiosity, on free exhibition. It came into his hands as a gift, and there is no doubt of its genuineness or the truth of the account of its origin. It will thus be seen that great interest attaches to the production. The picture represents an old man surrounded by traps and dogs, and the whole is full of spirit and purpose. It should be seen by all. — *Post*, Oct. 26, 1867.

A WORK OF ART AND A WONDER. — Visitors to Williams & Everett's will find there an exquisite little drawing which they will at first be pretty sure to mistake for a fine engraving. It represents the Village Rat-catcher and his dogs, and tells its own story at a glance. The picture may be regarded as quite perfect. The old man's face beams with a satisfied smile at the

success of his operations, and his whole attitude and expression are full of the reality of life. The terriers in various positions and with diverse characters are admirably rendered, and the same may be said of all the curious and grotesque and picturesque accessories. The grouping is admirable, and the entire execution pervaded by delicacy, grace, and accuracy. The closest study of details only brings out the varied excellences of this singularly felicitous production, abounding as they do in spirit and marked as they are by the touch of genius. Simply considered as a work of art, it might be coveted by anybody for its unquestionable merits.

But it is more than a work of art ; it is a wonder, for it is the *chef d'œuvre* of an untaught, poor, crippled silk-weaver, who drew and painted it with his mouth alone, without instruction and without assistance ! It is one of the results of his artistic impulses and his constant, patient, unwearying experiments and diligence. This seems incredible ; but such we are assured is the strange fact. It has always been owned by the English gentleman who has put it, as a curiosity, on free exhibition. It came into his hands as a gift, and there is no doubt of its genuineness, or the truth of the account of its origin. Besides this, only four of John Carter's (for that is the artist's name) productions are known to exist ; and one of those is in the possession of Queen Victoria.

John Carter was the son of a common laborer, in Coggeshall, Essex county, England. His only instruc-

tion — the rudiments of reading and writing — was obtained at the parish school. He never had a lesson in drawing or designing of any kind. In May, 1836, in company with dissolute companions, with whom he was then a hail fellow, he went on an expedition to steal young rooks, on the estate of Osgood Hanbury, a banker of London. He accidentally fell from a fir-tree forty feet in height. This casualty entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs. He was, until he died in 1850, hardly more than a useless trunk, without power of motion and without feeling in any part of his body except his head and neck. A visitor, about a year after this disabling paralysis, loaned him a book containing an account of a young woman who, losing the use of her hands, amused herself by drawing with her mouth. This account interested Carter, and he determined to try and do the same thing. After long-continued efforts, he succeeded, by slow degrees, in becoming marvelously efficient. "Resting upon his couch, he had his paper fixed to a desk, which was placed almost perpendicularly before and in close proximity to his face. With his head inclined towards the right side, and with his hair pencil between his teeth, he produced, by means of the motion of his neck, assisted by his lips and tongue, the most beautifully-turned strokes, *rivaling, in fact, the greatest proficients in the art of drawing.*" His wife or sister assisted him only by filling the brush from the palette with India ink, and placing it between his lips, he continuing to twirl it rapidly round so as to bring it to a fine point

for use. He first outlined or sketched his composition, and then filled in and shaded it after the manner of a line engraving.

Had we the space, much more might be told of this remarkable case. Carter was, as well as he might be, an object of great interest to the medical profession and leading artists of Great Britain, who knew of his condition and his works ; and it is safe to say that any one of the former might be very glad to claim, if he could, the old " Rat-catcher " as his own. The reader may think that we have unconsciously exaggerated the worth of this picture, considered simply as a picture. Such is not the fact, if we can trust the testimony of Landseer and other painters, and of engravers who have mistaken it for a line engraving. — *Evening Transcript*, Oct. 23, 1867.

A DRAWING by the late John Carter, of England, called " A Rat-catcher and His Dogs," is now on exhibition at Messrs. Williams & Everett's, in this city. Carter was a silk-weaver, without education ; by injuries received from falling from a tree, his body below his neck became paralyzed. He lived for eighteen years in this condition without the use of his limbs, and learned to draw with wonderful skill, holding the brush in his mouth. The drawing alluded to is considered his *chef-d'œuvre*. — *Commonwealth*, Oct. 26, 1867.

THE wonderful drawing of John Carter, to which we alluded in our issue of the 5th inst., — in a brief sketch which we then gave of the life of that extraordinary man, — is to be seen at Williams & Everett's, 234 Washington street. The exhibition is *free*, and one which, we venture to say, all lovers of art, no less than intelligent persons of every grade, must highly appreciate. An opportunity is now presented to the citizens of Boston, of seeing a marvel of art, which takes its stand in the very highest place which such a treasure commands. Of its class and kind we think it perfectly unique, and without a rival either in this or any other country. — *Evening Traveller*, Oct. 26, 1867.

THE wonderful drawing of the old "Rat-catcher," on exhibition at Williams & Everett's, has a queer history. The grouping is admirable, and the entire execution pervaded by delicacy, grace, and accuracy. Simply considered as a work of art, it might be coveted by anybody for its unquestionable merits. It is the work of an untaught, crippled silk-weaver, who drew it with his mouth alone. John Carter was the son of a common weaver in Coggeshall, Essex county, England. His only instruction — the rudiments of reading and writing — was obtained at the parish school. He never had a lesson in drawing or designing of any kind. In May, 1836, in company with dissipated companions, with whom he was then a hail fellow, he went on an expedition to steal young rooks, on the estate of

Osgood Hanbury, a banker of London. He accidentally fell from a fir-tree forty feet in height. This casualty entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs. He was, until he died in 1850, hardly more than a useless trunk, without power of motion and without feeling in any part of his body except his head and neck. A visitor, about a year after this disabling paralysis, loaned him a book containing an account of a young woman who, losing the use of her hands, amused herself by drawing with her mouth. This account interested Carter, and he determined to try and do the same thing. After long-continued efforts, he succeeded by slow degrees in becoming marvelously efficient. "Resting upon his couch, he had his paper fixed to a desk, which was placed almost perpendicularly before and in close proximity to his face. With his head inclined towards the right side, and with his hair pencil between his teeth, he produced, by means of the motion of his neck, assisted by his lips and tongue, the most beautifully-turned strokes, rivaling, in fact, the greatest proficients in the art of drawing." His wife or sister assisted him only by filling the brush from the palette with Indian ink, and placing it between his lips. He continued to twirl it rapidly round so as to bring it to a fine point for use. He first outlined or sketched his composition and then filled in and shaded it after the manner of a line engraving. — *Commonwealth*, Nov. 16, 1867.

A WONDER OF ART. — Our attention has been called to a very remarkable piece of work now on exhibition at the picture establishment of Williams & Everett, in Washington street. It is a small drawing in India ink, the style being that of a line engraving, and represents a man with four terrier dogs unearthing rats, and several rats lying speechless in the back-ground. The delineation, even to the hair of the dogs and rats, is, as far as our eye can distinguish, simply perfect, and brimful of the liveliest expression. As seen by the naked eye, the workmanship would do credit to any artist who had the full use of all his organs and faculties; and we are told that even a powerful magnifier fails to detect the least blemish in the firm yet delicate lining. And the wonder of the thing is, that it was all done with the mouth and tongue, the author's whole body being paralyzed, with the exception of the head and neck.

It is the work of an Englishman, John Carter by name, and a silk-weaver by trade, whose education in his boyhood had not gone beyond the rudiments of reading and writing. In drawing or designing of any sort he had no practice nor knowledge whatever, nor even any idea of them. At the age of about twenty-one he went one night, with some companions, to poaching from a rookery in the neighborhood, when he caught a fall from the top of a fir-tree some forty feet high. His spinal cord, as it afterwards proved, was fatally injured just at the base of the neck. He was carried home insensible, and nobody supposed he could live; never-

theless he did survive for fourteen years, his entire frame below the neck being all the while locked up in a paralysis, without any sensibility or the slightest power of voluntary motion. About a year after the accident, a lady presented him with a book giving an account of a young woman who, having lost the use of her hands, had amused herself with drawing with her mouth. He became much interested, and resolved on trying to do the same. His first essays were in copying flowers and butterflies in water-colors, but it was not long before he proceeded to a higher style. His whole vital force seemed to concentrate itself in his head and face, his senses becoming wonderfully delicate and acute, and the muscles of his mouth and tongue capable of the swiftest and exactest motions. Reclining on a couch, he had his paper fixed to a desk which was placed nearly in an upright position close to his face. His attendant would then fill his camel's hair brush with India ink, and put it between his teeth. This done, he would then, by a curious action of his lips and tongue, twirl the brush round with great swiftness till he brought it to a very fine point, and got rid of all superfluous ink. He would then, by the motions of his neck and mouth, execute the finest and most exquisite strokes, "rivaling, in fact, the greatest proficients in the art of drawing."

The "Rat-catcher with his Dogs," which is said to be Mr. Carter's best performance, is a piece of surpassing excellence and beauty in itself; but, considering the circumstances in which it was produced, it is alto-

gether the most wonderful specimen of art-work that we have ever seen. We understand the picture is to be photographed. It is owned, we believe, by an English gentleman who has lately come to this country and is now living in the vicinity of Boston. — *Gazette*, Dec. 1, 1867.

WILLIAMS & EVERETT have published a very fine photograph of the picture which has attracted so much attention at their rooms — “A Rat-catcher with his Dogs.” The picture is the work of Mr. John Carter, who, in early life, lost the use his limbs, and subsequently acquired the art of drawing *with his mouth*. The “Rat-catcher” is his best work: it is truly a wonderful picture, when the manner of its execution is considered. — *Journal*, Dec. 7, 1867.

“THE RAT-CATCHER AND HIS DOGS.” — This is the name of a drawing in Indian ink, which has been on exhibition at Williams & Everett’s (234 Washington Street), for the last month. As a picture it would do credit to any artist; but the remarkable thing about it is, that it is the work of a poor paralytic, without any power of motion except in his head and neck. This man, moreover, was, before the accident which so disabled him, a poor silk-weaver in the county of Essex, England, who scarcely knew how to read and write. By persevering efforts he learned to draw with his

mouth, and with so much skill that his drawings are not only curiosities, but works of art.

John Carter died in 1850, at the age of thirty-five. He was fourteen years a cripple. There are not many of his drawings extant. Of these one is in the possession of the Queen of England. The "Rat-catcher and his Dogs" belongs to a gentleman in the vicinity of Boston. Williams & Everett have had it photographed, and so admirably, that in point of delicacy and beauty there is little to choose between the copies and the original. — *Gazette*, Dec. 8, 1867.

WE noticed at some length, several months ago, the *chef-d'œuvre* of John Carter, "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," drawn with the brush held in the mouth. The gentleman who owns it has caused it to be photographed. The work has been done under his immediate supervision, and has been attended with a success really remarkable. The picture is very neat and taking, and we can assure the incredulous that Carter would have been very highly esteemed as an artist, even if he had worked with his hands. — *Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 9, 1867.

FINE ARTS. — We draw the attention of our readers to an advertisement from Williams & Everett, the well known publishers, announcing that "The Extraordinary Picture of 'A Rat-catcher with his Dogs,' drawn by means of the mouth, by John Carter, has been most

successfully Photographed." To add our testimony to this fact, without further comment, would be doing but bare justice ; that the photograph is a great success, is unquestionable ; it appears, moreover, worthy of the original picture which it represents ; it is difficult to express greater praise than that, for Carter's drawing stands, and ever has stood, in our estimation, as a marvelous production, unique, and unrivaled. The photograph now offered to the public will be found, we think, to justify the pains and expense bestowed upon it in order to produce a work of art equal to the occasion, and at the same time at such a price as to be within reach of all. — *Evening Traveller*, Dec. 14, 1867.

THAT astonishing drawing of John Carter's, executed by means of the mouth alone, — "A Rat-catcher and his Dogs," — which has been so successfully photographed, is on sale at Messrs. Williams & Everett's. It seems almost beyond belief that anything so elaborate as the original, rivaling in the great delicacy of its execution the finest line engravings, could be accomplished without the aid of hands, but of this there cannot be the slightest doubt. The following extract from a letter to the owner of the original drawing, dated "Upton, near Forest Gate, Essex, England, Dec. 19, 1867," from John Mills, Esq., the well known author of "The Old English Gentleman," "The Sportsman's Library," "Our County," and many other standard works on sporting matters, gives some information

not only in reference to the picture itself, but to Carter, which will be read with interest: "With regard to John Carter and the drawing made by him of the 'Rat-catcher,' I can only state that I gave him the order to make it for you in the year that I was married, 1849. That I myself saw him engaged in the work, and upon completion I presented it to you. He was born in Coggeshall, met with the accident in stealing rooks from Holfield Grange, Coggeshall, which deprived him of the total use of his limbs, and died at Coggeshall, in the county of Essex, 1850. I do not know the exact date of his death; but the present Vicar of Coggeshall, the Rev. J. W. Dampier, buried him, and would, upon application, give you further particulars. His life and strange method of drawing with his mouth, was published in the "Illustrated London News," and is a matter of history. Singular to relate, the immediate cause of his death was from being thrown out of an invalid chair, in which, occasionally, he used to be drawn about the neighborhood." The photograph is a splendid specimen of the art, reflects the original very faithfully, and should be in the possession of all lovers of the extraordinary in art. — *Evening Traveller*, Jan. 2, 1868.

JOHN CARTER AND "A RAT-CATCHER AND HIS DOGS." — Some who have seen this remarkable, almost marvelous production, have, naturally enough, made two mistakes. They have failed to appreciate its wonderful execution, under the impression that it is

only wonderful as the work of a paralytic, and not in itself considered. Then it has seemed too great a draft upon their credulity to ask them to believe that such a picture could have been drawn and finished by an ignorant and crippled peasant, as is alleged. The first of these errors is met by a study of the drawing. To remove the other, the following statement, containing facts additional to those already made public, which we are assured is strictly true in every respect, has been handed to us. The reader will see how conclusive and satisfactory it is:—

The owner of the picture is Mr. F. J. Mills, an Englishman, at present residing at Lynn, who brought it to this country from the Cape of Good Hope in August last, and has had it in his possession in that colony for the last nineteen years, namely, since 1849. The Memoir of John Carter's life, already published (and which is given with each photograph of the picture), taken from the account written by the Rev. Philip Honeywood, then Rector of Coggeshall (Carter's parish), in the county of Essex, England, alludes to Richard Meredith White, Esq., of Highfields, Coggeshall, and Osgood Hanbury, Esq., of Holfield Grange, Coggeshall, as two in particular, amongst many kind friends that Carter possessed; it is not generally known, however, that these two gentlemen mainly, if not entirely, supported Carter and his family. It was in a cottage on the estate "Highfields," a cottage given to him by Mr. White, that Carter lived

from the time of his accident in May, 1836, until he met with his untimely death in 1850.

In 1847 Mr. John Mills, a brother of the Mr. F. J. Mills just spoken of, expressed a wish to Carter that he would execute a drawing for him. Carter had at that time just reached the zenith of his wondrous skill. He had completed one small picture of "Our Saviour on the Cross," for the Queen of England; a duplicate of the same subject for the late Queen Dowager of England; the portrait of a favorite spaniel for Mr. Hanbury; and for Mr. White the likeness of his favorite riding horse. In compliance with Mr. John Mills' wish, no less than to mark a happy event which was to take place in Mr. White's family (the marriage of Mr. White's daughter to Mr. John Mills), Carter exerted himself to accomplish his beautiful picture of the "Rat-catcher with his Dogs." To be present at his brother's wedding, which took place at Coggeshall, in June, 1849, Mr. F. J. Mills went from the Cape of Good Hope to England, and it was then that he received from his brother John the gift of this exquisite picture. He again left England in September, 1849, to reside permanently in the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and carried the picture with him.

Thus this great work of art has remained in its present owner's possession from the time of its completion. The remote part of the world in which it has been placed for this length of time, explains fully and truly how it happened that a work of art so marvelously beautiful, so deserving of a foremost place in the es-

teem and knowledge of the public, should have remained comparatively unknown up to the present time. To Boston belongs the privilege of being the very first place to bring it into public notice ; as it was at the request of a few friends of Mr. F. J. Mills here that he placed it in the hands of Williams & Everett for free exhibition, and very recently has allowed it to be photographed.

In a letter received a few days ago, Mr. John Mills makes the following remark to his brother touching Carter's picture. The letter is dated "Upton, near Forest Gate, Essex, Dec. 19, 1867," and is in reply to one written from Lynn saying that some persons here seemed to doubt the truth of the strange, eventful history connected with John Carter and his picture. Mr. John Mills writes as follows: "With regard to John Carter and the drawing made by him of the 'Rat-catcher,' I can only say that I gave him the order to make it for you ; that it was completed in the year that I was married, 1849, that I myself saw him engaged on the work, and upon completion I presented it to you. He was born in Coggeshall, met with the accident in stealing rooks from 'Holfield Grange,' Coggeshall, which deprived him of the total use of his limbs, and he died at Coggeshall, in the county of Essex, 1850. I do not know the exact date of his death ; but the present Vicar of Coggeshall, the Rev. J. W. Dampier, buried him, and would, upon application, give you further particulars. His life and strange method of drawing with his mouth was published, I think, in the

'Illustrated London News,' and is a matter of history. Singular to relate, the immediate cause of his death was from being thrown out of an invalid chair, in which, occasionally, he used to be drawn about the neighborhood. A little boy was dragging him up a hill called the 'Market Hill,' in Coggeshall, when it overpowered him from the weight, and running back, Carter was turned over and so much injured from the shock that he died shortly afterwards. Such is fate!"

The writer of the letter from which this extract is taken is the same John Mills, who, as an author, is well and favorably known amongst British sportsmen. His work entitled "The Sportsman's Library" is a standard one of reference in the "Old Country," and other productions of his pen, as "The Old English Gentleman," "The Stage Coach," "The Old Hall," "The English Fireside," "Our County," etc., etc., are books much read and enjoyed by all lovers of sport "by flood and field." To attempt to show *how* Carter became a really great artist — how from an uneducated, poor, ignorant silk-weaver, deprived of the use of every limb by paralysis, he was able to draw, by means of his mouth, with a style of nearly perfect finish and precision; to reason or to theorize upon the "why and wherefore" of all this; and more, as to how he was gifted with the accurate perception necessary to delineate in true proportion and perspective the human form divine, besides animals, such as dogs and horses, all with an exactitude, and with anatomical proportions simply perfect, is beyond

our power. But here is the fact. Carter, brought down to the lowest level to which it is possible to conceive a once strong and hale man could be brought (a useless trunk, with *sense* to see and comprehend his own utter helplessness), did, by force of what we call genius, manifest almost spontaneously the highest qualities of an artist, as is testified by those most competent to judge of success. — *Evening Transcript*, Jan. 7, 1868.

CARTER'S "RAT-CATCHER WITH HIS DOGS." — The wonderful drawing by John Carter of the "Rat-catcher with his Dogs," at Williams & Everett's, continues to attract much attention and admiration. An artist of high standing and an unquestionable critic in these matters, remarked a day or two since that if this production had come from the studio of a leading artist it would be considered the finest work of art of its kind in the world. The more thoroughly the work is examined the more wonderful it appears. Viewed through a magnifying glass its construction and execution is even still more wonderful. That a man, who, until long after the terrible accident that befell him, knew nothing whatever of art — as a matter of fact he could neither read nor write — should, by the use of his mouth alone, in which the brush was placed, elaborate so exquisite an achievement, would be incredible were it not established as a fact by the amplest evidence. It is only another evidence that man has resources which are never dreamed of, and which some-

times are never developed ; except as in this case, under the saddest physical affliction. Mr. Carter for many years was entirely helpless so far as body, legs, and arms were concerned, not being able even to raise the little brush which he used to his mouth. And yet here is a work of art that will answer the most exacting demands of criticism, and which would bring fame to the greatest artist living. Let us do credit to the genius of this humble man, who, to while away his dreary hours, patiently worked out what thousands of our citizens have gazed at with wonder and admiration during the last six months. — *Post*, Jan. 20, 1868.

CARTER'S "Rat-catcher" has gone to Portland, Me., for a short time, an enterprising publishing house in that city having sent its owner an order for quite a number of the photographs, and in this way secured the exhibition of the original for their customers. The good people of the "Forest City" have now the chance of seeing a curiosity of art never before equaled. — *Evening Transcript*, Feb. 21, 1868.

JOHN CARTER, THE ARTIST. — The very high estimation in which the works of John Carter are held in England may be gathered from the following letter addressed to Mr. F. J. Mills (owner of Carter's wondrous drawing of "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs"), by the Rev. W. J. Dampier, Vicar of Coggeshall, Essex, England, the birthplace and scene of Carter's marvel-

ous career. The letter is dated "Coggeshall Vicarage, Essex, 7th February, 1868," and states as follows: "I am glad, indeed, to give you information about my former parishioner, John Carter, for his case was the most extraordinary upon record. His works, *executed with his mouth*, in India ink, are exquisitely done, and as he was, moreover, an exemplary Christian, I was induced to publish a memoir of him shortly after his death, illustrated with copperplates and wood-cuts, showing his progress from his first work to perfection. I was permitted to present a copy to the Queen, who had one of Carter's drawings, and the book sold well. It is now out of print. I have been urged to print another edition, but have not yet, though I have the plates by me. I am pleased, but not surprised, to find many on your side of the water so much interested in the history of John Carter, and shall be glad to hear from you if there is anything you wish me to tell you." — *Evening Transcript*, Feb. 28, 1868.

RATS AND RAT-CATCHERS (*Suggested by John Carter's picture*). — Amongst the thousands of our fellow citizens who have lately gazed with astonishment and delight at the wonderful picture by John Carter of "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," there are but few, comparatively, who thoroughly comprehend the "story" so faithfully portrayed by that artist's magic pencil, simply because "the professional rat-catcher" is an unknown personage in this country; whereas, in Great

Britain, he follows a calling of considerable importance. To the farmer or country gentleman, he has become an absolute necessity, and is universally known within the limits of his parish as well or better than the parson, doctor, or village lawyer. The rat-catcher usually is a jovial sort of "blade," fonder of "sport" than of "hard work;" one with whom the love of dogs and "varmint" is imbibed almost with his mother's milk. The "calling" descends in nine cases out of ten from father to son, a sort of heir-loom, and so continues for generations, an hereditary *right*, linked, no doubt, by an hereditary *taste*.

At the "meet" of fox-hounds, harriers, or beagles, at the *draw* of the "badger," or what not, so long as there is *sport* to be had, you are safe to find the village rat-catcher an interested and delighted spectator. Generally a welcome guest, too, wherever he goes; anecdote and adventure, fun and frolic, are at his fingers' ends, no matter whether it be culled for the amusement of the "parlor" or "servants' hall."

A regular rat-catcher must be an undoubted judge of dogs and ferrets, numbers of both of which he keeps for their occupation: without such aid *his* occupation would be gone indeed. In his estimation a thoroughly trained terrier, or ferret, is an object of surpassing interest and of great value. It would surprise our readers did they learn the sums of money given for such "perfect beauties," which, to the non-initiated, would appear all but worthless. This value arises from the

fact that the common brown rat swarms in Great Britain and multiplies exceedingly fast.

What the American ranger said of the bear may be applied to the rat in England ; it is the " knowingest varmint " of any creature alive ; its sagacity and cunning are extraordinary, and its daring courage equally remarkable, considering its size. So ferocious are these rats that they do not hesitate to prey on one another when other food is lacking. They breed three times a year, producing from ten to twenty in a litter. The voracious and destructive habits of the rat not only make it a great pest wherever grain is housed or stacked, but cause it to be disliked wherever found. The farmer, however, is, perchance, the rat's greatest enemy among men. Bent upon thinning its numbers, or exterminating it, if may be, he does not hesitate to support liberally the professional rat-catcher, who usually agrees with the farmer or country gentleman to keep his house and grounds free from rats for an annual payment, or else so much for the particular job. The first mode of payment is of course the most satisfactory to a man who follows rat-catching as a trade, as it constitutes one of his certain dependences for a livelihood.

Traps and poison are generally most ineffectual methods for destroying rats, even where they are swarming, and the simple reason is that the sagacious instinct of the " varmint " is a match for such puerile attempts to capture it. Thus the professional rat-catcher becomes a necessity to the rest of the com-

munity, and in order to render his method effective he employs antagonists most dreaded by the rat — the “ferret,” and the “wiry terrier dog.” The former of these two can follow a rat into its hole and through all its tortuous “runs,” and the alarm and horror it creates is soon manifest. The rats fly wherever they can, the ferret pursuing and darting at the neck. The rats who fly to the mouth of the holes are killed by the dogs, while those who remain in the “runs” meet a similar fate from the ferrets — thus few escape. The rat-catcher’s well-trained dog is not only a dexterous but a humane slaughterer. He gives no unnecessary tortures ; never tantalizes his victim while alive, nor “worries ” it when dead. If a dozen rats rush out at once he wheels nimbly about, catches each by the nape of the neck, and with a single nip polishes each off in the most artistical way, and in the shortest possible space of time.

Those of our readers who may have witnessed a “rat hunt ” at some farm homestead in the “old country,” cannot fail to have been amused with the quiet, mysterious air with which “the professional rat-catcher” (save the mark !) goes about his business, and the contempt he invariably manifests towards all dabblers in the science. With his dogs in a cluster round him, and his cage of ferrets slung across his shoulders, he takes a preliminary view of the position to be carried by assault, and does so with all the grandiose air and dignity of a general gazing at a citadel he is about to storm and — win. The barking of his dogs tells him

in unerring language that there are rats below, and taking a ferret from his cage he puts it down the most promising "run." In a minute or two a squealing tells too surely the alarm and dismay which the presence and assault of the ferret has caused. The rat-catcher gives the word of command to his dogs, "Stand!" and each either guards a separate hole or together form a circle round the lot; a wave of their master's hand indicates which they are to do. Then with a smirk of self-complacency the old rat-catcher takes up his position, close to his "favorites," and directs their every movement with a wave of his hand.

Not a word is spoken; no occasion to scold such well-trained dogs; each takes up the position indicated to him, and stands, statue-like, with bated breath; not daring to move a muscle, though bursting with impatience, lest the sport should be spoiled. As the rats rush out, each is snapped up in a twinkling by the nearest dog, and so the fun goes on.

Such is an outline of the rural story which John Carter, the peasant artist, has essayed to tell in this his wonderful work. He was no doubt familiar with like scenes from boyhood. Drawn "*con amore*," his picture is as comprehensive in all its details as it is marvelous in execution and finish. — *Evening Transcript*, March 2, 1868.

THE "RAT-CATCHER AND HIS DOGS." — Perhaps it is not surprising, in view of the perfection of this drawing, that some have hesitated and many still hesitate to

believe the marvelous story about the artist. The following correspondence, which has been handed us, ought to silence all doubts ; for it shows that interested parties, for business purposes, set on foot an inquiry dictated by their own desire not to be deceived, and they very generously allow the result of their investigation to be made public : —

To the Editor of the Transcript : In submitting the following correspondence for publication, I may be permitted to say that any attempt to defend Carter's history and works of art from a charge of "untruthfulness" seems to me as trying

"To guard a title that was rich before."

To any one acquainted with the life and character of this artist, it must appear, as it does to me, almost sacrilege to couple his name and works with doubts about his or their "truth ;" for of all men whom I have ever seen, or ever read of, John Carter was, humanly speaking, preëminently conspicuous for "truthfulness." This was so marked in all that he said, in all that he did, for the last twelve years of his life, as to make it particularly observable to every one who approached him.

Two traits of character were astonishingly developed in him, as the publication of his life by the Rev. J. W. Dampier will prove, — the one a strange persistency in effecting his purpose ; the other a love, a deep-seated love, of "truth." To the latter may be attributed, in no small measure, that thorough, that complete success

which attended Carter's efforts as an artist ; whilst the other stood him in good need, lacking, as he did, any education or rearing in the rudiments of his profession.

But as I have now laid my picture before the public, and as I have solicited, and still solicit their patronage with respect to the publication of the photograph issued of that picture, I conceive I have no right any longer to follow the bent simply of my own inclinations, but as a duty, in return for public confidence and support, to give all the aid in my power in placing every question that may arise as to its genuineness beyond dispute.

Yours obediently,

F. J. MILLS.

LYNN, MASS., 11th April, 1868.

BOSTON, April 4, 1868.

F. J. MILLS, ESQ. : —

Dear Sir, — Two or three months since, supposing we might possibly have an interest in the publication of an engraving from your picture of the " Rat-catcher," we sent your Life of John Carter to Messrs. Le Blond & Co., of London (whose American agents we are), asking them to ascertain if that account was altogether authentic. In a letter of March 17, they write as follows : " We made several ineffectual attempts to learn of Mr. Carter, the painter referred to in your last, but without success, until happening to mention the subject to a friend who knew the family of the Hanburys. She offered to write to headquarters — the Mr. Osgood Hanbury referred to ; and we have much pleasure in

handing you the letter our friend received in reply, which confirms, we think, all that is stated of Mr. Carter in the pamphlet you sent us."

The following is a copy of the letter received by Messrs. Le Blond's friend:—

"Miss Hanbury's compliments to Mrs. T. Farwell; and the account of poor Carter is perfectly true. He was one of Miss Hanbury's grandfather's laborers, and well-known to herself and all the family. We used constantly to visit him and see him draw with his mouth.

"HOLFELD GRANGE, *March 14, 1868.*"

If the above be of any service to you please make use of it.

Yours, very obediently,

L. A. ELLIOT & Co.

LYNN, MASS., *April 8, 1868.*

MESSRS. L. A. ELLIOT & Co., Publishers, Washington Street, Boston:—

Gentlemen,—I have received your favor of the 4th, and can hardly help feeling, as you may conceive, surprised at its contents; because, during the negotiation which we had together, with reference to your desire to publish an engraving of Carter's picture,—“A Rat-catcher with his Dogs,”—nothing occurred which led me to suppose for one moment but that you had, without doubt, realized the truth as to the genuineness of the history attached to that wonderful exhibition of human skill. On reflection, however, I ought not to

be surprised or to feel hurt, that the account which I gave you of the circumstances surrounding Carter as an artist, did not meet with that ready belief at your hands which an ordinary matter of every-day occurrence would doubtless have done.

It is, nevertheless, "hard" to discover that statements made *bonâ fide*, with seriousness as to actual matters of fact, have been viewed, the while, in the light of "traveller's tales." I can only add how delighted I am to think that, as you did *not* believe, you took your own method of proving the truth or otherwise of what I claim for Carter.

It is, I will allow, a great demand on credulity, to ask persons to believe that an English peasant, paralyzed from his neck downwards, unlearned in the art of drawing (except so far as being self-taught), has, by means of his mouth, achieved works as a draughtsman, which out-rival all competitors. Yet such is the fact, as you have now discovered for yourselves.

I remain, gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

F. J. MILLS.

— *Evening Transcript*, April 15, 1868.

AN ENGLISH CRIPPLE. — The wonderful *chef-d'œuvre* of John Carter, "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs," is a striking illustration of the triumph of mind over bodily infirmity. Mr. Carter was born in Coggeshall, in the year 1815, received a very limited education, became a

silk-weaver, and when twenty-one years of age, fell from the top of a fir-tree forty feet high, while stealing rooks in the night-time. He was taken up for dead. When he partially recovered, it was found that his spine was so injured that he had wholly lost the power of muscular motion, save in the head and neck. Until his death, fourteen years after, he continued to be a helpless, impotent trunk. He could see, hear, and speak, but otherwise he was like a dead man. Having heard of a woman who had learned to draw with her mouth, he resolved to try to do the same. He never had shown the least taste for the work, but after long and painful efforts he succeeded in copying flowers and butterflies in water-colors. This he did afterwards with pencil, shading the picture with Indian ink. He always reclined on a bed with a desk almost perpendicularly over him, near his face. An attendant handed him his camel's hair brush, placing it in his teeth. Carter then whirled it rapidly round by his lips and tongue till superfluous ink was removed and a fine point obtained. Then he executed the finest work — one specimen of which is in the possession of Queen Victoria, another belonged to the Queen Dowager. Medical men as well as artists visited this wonderful cripple, amazed to see one who not only was physically helpless, but mentally untrained, even in the rudiments of art, exhibit such incredible dexterity in artistic labor, rivaling the works of the first living artists. No one can look at the photographs Messrs. Child & Co. have for sale, without being impressed with the thought that

there is in all of us a reserved force or talents seldom developed, and also with the beauty of that law of compensation which runs through nature, curiously adjusting the differences and beneficently repairing the losses of life. — *Boston Medical Paper.*

NEW YORK.

THERE has recently been on exhibition in Boston, at Williams & Everett's, an exquisite little drawing, which at first appears to be a fine engraving. It represents the "Village Rat-catcher and his dogs," and though very perfect as a work of art, it is of peculiar interest as being the *master-piece* of a poor, untaught, crippled silk-weaver, who drew and painted it with his mouth alone, unassisted, and without instruction. Incredible as this may seem, there is no doubt of the fact. John Carter (for that is the artist's name) was the son of a common laborer in England. In early life he fell from a tree forty feet in height, which accident entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs, every part of the body being paralyzed, excepting his head and neck. In this condition the idea occurred to him of amusing himself by drawing with his mouth; and after long-continued efforts he succeeded. His wife or sister assisted him only by filling the brush from the palette with Indian ink, and placing it between his lips. He continued to twirl it rapidly round so as to bring it to a fine point for use. He first outlined or sketched his composition, and then filled in and shaded it after the

manner of a line engraving. His work was performed resting upon his couch, his paper being fastened to a desk, which was placed almost perpendicularly before, and in close proximity to his face. With his head inclined toward the right side, and with his hair-pencil between his teeth, he produced, by the means of the motion of his neck, assisted by his lips and tongue, the most beautifully-turned strokes, rivaling in fact, the greatest proficient in the art of drawing. — *Harper's Weekly*, Feb. 22, 1868.

A CURIOUS WORK OF ART. — We saw at Hurd & Houghton's, on Saturday, a work of art which is not only remarkable intrinsically, but whose history places it among the marvels of our time. It is a small drawing, about twelve by fourteen inches, and is called "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs." The rat-catcher sits on sloping ground, near a barn, looking with pleased intentness on the rat-hole between his outstretched legs, and holding, ready for use, a long stick used by men of his profession. On each side are the dogs, of various colors and ages, and each in a peculiar attitude. One is flat on the ground with his nose over the hole. Another has his fore paws over a log in front of the hole. Another, a young puppy, stands looking toward the hole at a safe distance, and braced back for a sudden retreat. On the right a rat-trap, with two dead rats near by, explains at once the character of the picture.

The simplicity and uniqueness of the design ; the harmony of the expressions shown on the faces of the human and brute rat-catchers ; the admirable drawing and perfection of details, entitle this picture to high rank in its line of art. It has an interest which can only be secured by a drawing that is entirely true to nature. We are glad, therefore, that full-sized photographs are to be offered for sale, one of which, now before us, reproduces the original with wonderful exactness. On its own merits so admirable a drawing should have a large sale. Aside from this, however, the picture has a peculiar interest. It was drawn by a man named John Carter, a native of the town of Coggeshall, in England, by means of his mouth alone. It seems that Carter, previously uninstructed in art or anything else except dissipation, while engaged in the operation of stealing rooks fell from the top of a fir-tree a distance of forty feet. The injury permanently paralyzed all of his limbs. He could move no part of his body save his head and neck. About a year afterwards he read of a disabled young woman who learned to draw by the aid of her mouth, and began to attempt it himself. He finally succeeded. Resting on his couch, he had his paper fixed to a desk, almost perpendicularly before and close to his face. With his head turned to the right and his hair pencil between his teeth, he was able, by the conjoint motion of his neck, lips, and tongue, to produce the most delicate strokes. There are but few of his works extant, of which Queen Victoria has one. The one now here is

regarded as his best effort. It is, or will soon be, on exhibition at Schaus's Gallery, where the photographic copies can be obtained. — *Evening Post*, April 28, 1868.

FINE ARTS. — Among the novelties at Schaus' picture gallery is a beautiful and daintily finished sketch in Indian ink, entitled "A Rat-catcher and his Dogs." By its own merits, this work of art would attract attention. But the peculiar wonder of the piece is, that its execution was achieved by a self-taught artist, Mr. John Carter, who, by an accident, was entirely deprived of the use of his arms and hands. By holding the brush in his teeth he has produced results which many full-handed artists could not surpass, and given another proof of the versatility of man's natural resources. — *Journal of Commerce*, April 29, 1868.

JOHN CARTER'S "RAT-CATCHER AND HIS DOGS." — Mr. Schaus has now on exhibition at his gallery in Broadway, a work of art that with a silent voice preaches a more eloquent sermon than often falls from human lips. An inspiring sermon teaching lessons of faith, and hope, and constancy; of sweetness and humility joined to an invincible courage and self-reliance, such as to read ought to put strength into the weakest heart that shrinks frightened and disheartened from its appointed lot in life. Nor ought it less to shame those to whom strength and opportunity are given, but who in the possession all their faculties of

body and mind, with sound limbs and perfect senses, still find a lion in every path, and are tripped by every straw.

Yet the work we speak of is so small and unpretending that it may easily be passed by unnoticed. To the superficial eye it has few attractions compared with the bright-colored pictures, the showy engravings, and the hundred curious and pretty knick-knacks that cover Schaus' walls and crowd his tables. But the eye that stops and studies attentively this drawing of a few square inches will be well rewarded. For not only is it an exquisite specimen of manipulation, — merely as a piece of drawing worthy to stand beside the work of masters, — it is beside a revelation of the power of the human mind to rise above the afflictions and wounds of the flesh ; to turn calamity itself into a blessing, and with a body hanging on the very verge of the grave to conceive an impossible task and pursue it unwearied, uncomplaining, and undaunted, through fourteen years of death-in-life.

This drawing, "The Rat-catcher and his Dogs," was executed in Indian ink by an Englishman named John Carter with the point of a hair pencil which was held between his teeth, an injury to his spine having entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs. The difficulties he was obliged to overcome in executing such a work, and which we shall presently describe, were so many and so great that it will surprise no one to be told that he produced very few drawings. Five only are known to exist, of which "The Rat-catcher

and his Dogs" is said to be by far the finest. Of the remaining four, one is in the possession of the Queen of England; another belonged to the late Queen Dowager of England; and Osgood Hanbury Esq., of Holfield Grange, and Richard Meredith White, Esq., of Highfields, near Coggeshall, Essex, two gentlemen who greatly befriended Carter, each own one. "The Rat-catcher and his Dogs" is the property of F. J. Mills, Esq., to whom it was presented by Mr. White on the occasion of a marriage between the families. When we consider the extraordinary character of this little picture, the excellence of its composition, telling the story at once, its truth to nature, and the combined vigor and delicacy of the drawing, such that, while it loses nothing by being seen at a distance, it will yet bear and repay the closest inspection, it is not surprising that many persons have been unwilling, perhaps we should rather say, unable, to believe that it was made by a poor unlettered peasant working under the painful conditions we have described. Mr. Mills has, however, fully satisfied us that the story is true in every particular, and has enabled us to state our entire belief that the whole matter is as he represents it. He has put into our hands a very interesting Memoir of Carter, written by the Rev. William James Dampier, Vicar of Coggeshall, Essex, the artist's native place, in which the fullest details are given of the life of the man, his personal character, and his methods of work. The book contained also a number of engravings, a portrait of Carter at work, his desk and implements,

together with *fac-similes* engraved with the greatest care by Holl, of his earliest attempts at drawing. These engravings Mr. Mills has judiciously removed from the book and has had them mounted and placed alongside Carter's masterpiece, "The Rat-catcher and his Dogs," so that, while the intrinsic excellence of that work and the qualities that produced it must always excite our admiration, the mere wonder of it is greatly diminished, it is no longer a vulgar miracle; we see the steps by which the artist reached its height, and hail again in poor, ignorant, maimed John Carter the glorious energy, the will, the devotion that have so often shined with divine fire in the history of man, and whose manifestation in him allies this humble peasant boy with the noble ones of his race. It is the old story of faith that removes mountains, the sublime lesson written on the ages that there is no difficulty so great that persevering energy cannot conquer, no goal so distant nor so high that the unwearied foot and the untiring heart cannot reach it.

John Carter was born in the year 1815, in the town of Coggeshall, Essex, England. He was the son of poor parents in the lowest rank of English society, his father having been a common laborer. The only teaching he ever had was got in the parish-school, where he learned to read and write after the manner of English peasants, and also to cipher a very little. He had no love of study, nor any aptitude for it. He spent his time as boys of his class usually do, sharing in all their sports and mischief, and, without being

notable either way as bad or good, grew up after a poor enough fashion till the time came for him to earn his own living, when he was bound apprentice to a silk-weaver, at which trade he worked until he was of age. In May, 1836, in company with some low companions, he went one night to Holfield Grange, the seat of Os-good Hanbury, Esq., to steal young rooks from the rookery on that gentleman's estate, and having climbed a fir-tree, slipped, lost his hold, and fell to the ground, a distance of not less than forty feet.

His companions picked him up in a state of complete insensibility, and carried him home to his wife. The medical man was sent for, and he declared that, though Carter was not actually dead, as had at first been supposed, yet he could not live but a few hours at the most. But the event proved the doctor mistaken, for, after some time, he partially recovered, and lived, if living it could be called, for fourteen years, not dying till the year 1850. But the doctor's sagacity must not be called in question, for Carter's case was one of the most extraordinary that has been recorded, and attracted the attention of the most learned medical men and surgeons. After his death an examination of his body revealed the astounding fact that several of the vertebræ of the upper part of the spinal column had been violently displaced — bent into an arch — so that the spinal cord was severely compressed at different points and prevented from performing any of its functions below that point. In fact, Carter, to use Mr. Dampier's language, lived for fourteen years

with a broken neck. The effect upon his body of this injury to the spinal cord was to utterly deprive him of the use of his limbs, and of all sensation in his body below his neck. He might be pinched until he was black and blue, without suffering in the least, indeed without consciousness, but it is said that he sometimes experienced a little relief from having his legs gently shaken. From the day of the accident to the day of his death, he was, physically speaking, never anything other than a useless, impotent trunk, without power of motion or feeling in any part of his body excepting in his head and neck. His head escaped without injury, and he enjoyed the full use of the senses of sight, hearing, smell, and taste ; the sense of touch, too, was not wanting in the head and neck, and we shall see that this sense, and that of sight, acquired, by reason of almost incessant exercise, an extraordinary degree of delicacy and precision. His eye became a microscope, and his lips and tongue took the place of hands.

About a year after the accident that so nearly cost him his life, his wife one day brought him a book which she had borrowed from a neighbor, and which gave an account of a young woman in an asylum at Liverpool, who had lost the use of her limbs, and who used to amuse herself by drawing with her mouth. Carter was so much interested in this story that, as he says himself, he could not rest satisfied until he had made the attempt to draw in the same manner. A butterfly happening one day to come in at the window,

he determined to take it for his first subject, and it having been caught, he proceeded to copy it with water-colors. Mr. Mills has placed a fac-simile of this little drawing at Schaus's, along with his other early attempts. He appears not to have been satisfied with his experiment, for he made no other drawings with water-colors, but after casting about for some time to find a suitable material and a good method of work, he at last fixed upon a certain style, apparently suggested by the study of some of Albert Dürer's woodcuts that fell into his hands, and of which he made copies. He copied with an accuracy very remarkable, considering his inexperience, the sitting figure of Christ on the title-page of Dürer's "Small Passion," and a Virgin with the infant Jesus, by the same master. These two drawings have been carefully engraved in fac-simile, by the celebrated engraver, Holl, who has also copied Carter's next performance, a man's head done professedly in imitation of Rembrandt's method of work. Holl was very much interested in Carter, and has testified his admiration in a note written to Mr. Dampier, the author of the Memoir we have above alluded to. As we have said, the engravings of all these preparatory studies have been placed by Mr. Mills side by side with his best work, "The Rat-catcher and his Dogs," and we are thus enabled to follow the development of his talent from its first rude beginning to the excellence of his latest production.

As for the details of Carter's procedure in execut-

ing these drawings, a few words may interest the reader. From the time of the accident until his death he lay upon a couch which, when occasion required it, or a little change of scene was desired, could be moved about the room. He lay upon his back, and his paper was fixed upon a light framework so arranged that it was directly over his face and within a few inches of it. His sister or his wife, or whoever was in attendance upon him at the time, then filled his sable brush with Indian ink, and placed it between his teeth, when, by the combined action of the lips and the tongue, most surprising to see and impossible to imitate or even to follow, he would twirl his brush round till he had got rid of the superfluous ink and had brought the brush to a very fine point. With his head inclined to the right, he would then, by the motion of the neck, aided by his lips and tongue draw stroke upon stroke, shading the outline, which he had previously drawn as accurately as he could with a pencil, after the manner of line engraving. As may be imagined, he worked with great difficulty and slowness, for he rested after every stroke of the brush, and bethought him where the next stroke was to be made. That it should be carefully made in the right direction, and of the right thickness, was of great importance, for, once made, it could not be erased. Nor could he work with any regularity, for his health would not permit it. Yet so intense was his desire to work at this pursuit, in which all the faculties of his body and mind had now concentrated themselves, and so un-

wearied was he, that he often tired out his attendants who filled his brush, sitting by his side for hours. His wife, a most affectionate and devoted woman, whose encouraging words and patient spirit were no less strengthening to his mind than her kind and thoughtful care was to his body, was taken from him four years and a half after the accident ; there remained to him, then, his sister, no less devoted to him, and friends who made his life as comfortable and cheerful as it was possible for generous men to do. It is plain that, without devoted care and cheerful surroundings, he could not have lived so long ; but he also owed many years of life to the interest excited in his mind by his favorite pursuit. So intense was that interest that it left him no time to brood over his bodily affliction.

Certainly, this is no common story. Carter's drawing of the rat-catcher is intrinsically an admirable performance ; Landseer is said to have declared that he never anywhere saw a finer piece of animal drawing than the white terrier, and everybody who looks at it carefully will admit its excellence. But the other dogs are also capital ; the old one at the left, who has had experience, and knows his game too well to share in the excitement of his white young friend ; the heavy-footed, fat-bodied puppy on the right, who does not quite know what is coming ; every lover of dogs will enjoy these shades of dog character. And how skillful, too, is the arrangement of the group ; how clearly it tells the little story ! Well, all this was

invented by John Carter. He had no sitter. Neither dogs nor men came to his room. He must have drawn it all from memory of what he had so often seen when he was a village boy, idling and lounging about the Coggeshall lanes, and in and out the cottages. An idle good-for-nought, an ignorant peasant, without much hope in the world ; without either aspiration or care for the future ; without much care for the present, except to get enough to eat for the day, and, later, enough for his young wife. This man—a man in body, but with a child's undeveloped mind—meets with an accident that by a mere hair's breadth sheers this side of death. Indeed, taken up for dead, he continued through fourteen years to all intents and purposes a dead man—alive only in one small portion of his frame, and for the rest so far as powers of motion, or consciousness, or usefulness went, as dead as when they laid him in the long-expected grave. Yet in this condition John Carter developed a new, and strong, and inspiring spiritual life. All the good in his nature, all the seeds of manly virtue that his poor, hard, unlovely life of yesterday had kept from quickening, sprang up and made the humble cottage in which he lived as holy as the cell of any saint. A sweet patience made complaint or repining a thing unknown ; his cheerful gratitude for any help of word or deed, made helping him, or teaching him, a pleasure ; and when his mind, searching all about for something to busy itself with, lighted on this plan of drawing, it was wonderful to see the energy, the ingenuity,

the unconquerable pluck with which this young man, who had never in all his life done more in that way than is done by hundreds of idle boys with pencils and chalk on their books and slates, set himself to work to learn to draw, and persevered until he drew like a master.

A Hymn to Poverty, a Hymn to Affliction and Calamity! Riches and Health and Prosperity shut the doors of heaven, and blind us to our best selves. But these rude-seeming ministers are man's true saviors, and to many, though to few in the same degree as to John Carter, a real life — a life of the spirit — has been made possible under circumstances most cruel and adverse, and good has come out of evil. *Daily Tribune*, May 14, 1868.

"THE RAT-CATCHER AND HIS DOGS." — A very remarkable picture is now on exhibition in the gallery of Mr. Schaus; remarkable for its intrinsic merits and also for the circumstances under which it was produced. It was the work of a man who was without the use of his limbs. His arms and hands and feet were dead, and this exquisite picture, every inch of which is full of the most delicate and refined handling, was executed with a brush held in the artist's mouth! Many members of etching clubs, having the full use of their hands, would rejoice could they approach the spirit, firmness, and refinement of this drawing.

The story of the artist, John Carter, of England, is

full of interest. A brief memoir of him, prepared by Mr. F. J. Mills, states that he was the son of a common laborer at Coggeshall, England, and, when a boy, acquired in a very imperfect degree the rudiments of reading and writing. He then became a silk-weaver by trade, and followed this business up to May, 1836, when he was twenty-one years old. At this time an accident befell him, which changed the whole course of his life. Up to this time he had led a wild and dissolute life, keeping bad company, and losing what little education he had acquired when a boy. One night, at the time above mentioned, Carter and a few dissolute companions went to the seat of Osgood Hanbury, Esq., a well-known London banker, for the purpose of stealing young rooks from the rookery on that estate. While in the very top of a fir-tree, not less than forty feet high, he lost his hold and fell to the ground. He was taken up by his comrades and taken home to his wife in a state of insensibility. The doctors pronounced his case hopeless. He partially recovered, however, when it was discovered that he had sustained an injury to the spine, which entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs ; nor had he any feeling or power of motion in any part of his body except his head and neck.

The powers of speech, sight, and hearing were provisionally unimpaired ; but otherwise he was a living mind with a dead body. His devoted wife waited on him with the tenderest care to the day of her death, which occurred a little more than four years after the

accident. The misfortune that deprived John Carter of the use of his limbs seemed to wake up the dormant faculties of his soul. He became thoughtful, earnest, and devout, and eagerly seized upon a plan that promised to give him something to live for. This was learning to draw without hands! About a year after the accident, a lady brought him a little book containing an account of a young woman, who, having lost the use of her hands, amused herself by drawing with her mouth. Carter resolved to try the same experiment. He began by copying butterflies and flowers, in water-colors, but soon gave this up for a more effective style of drawing. He used to lie on a couch, capable of being moved about as occasion required. The paper on which he drew was fixed to a desk placed almost perpendicularly before his face, and so near that he could reach it with a brush held in his mouth. His wife or sister would fill the brush with Indian ink and place it between his teeth, when, by an expert movement of his lips and tongue, he would twirl the brush round until he had thrown off all the superfluous ink and brought the brush to a very fine point. He would then execute the finest and firmest touches by the action of his neck, his work rivaling that of the most skillful draughtsman. Compelled to rest after every stroke, he worked very slowly and with great difficulty. Every touch had to be considered beforehand, because alteration was impossible; and as his health prevented a close application to his art, his works were necessarily produced very slowly. But five of his works are

known to be extant — one in possession of Queen Victoria, another belonged to the Queen Dowager of England, one to Mr. Osgood Hanbury, and one to Mr. Richard Meredith White. The fifth is in the possession of Mr. F. J. Mills, and is now on exhibition in Schaus's gallery.

This work, which has found its way to our city, is considered Carter's finest performance. It is full of character and meaning. The drawing of the old rat-catcher is admirable, and so is that of the white dog, to which Landseer, who is certainly an authority in such matters, gives very high praise. The execution of the picture is wonderful. Not a stroke is thrown away. Every line tells, and conduces to the effect of the whole. It must be remembered, that up to the time of his accident, John Carter was totally ignorant of art. He had never handled a pencil, never felt an interest in drawing or in pictures. All his knowledge was acquired when his bodily powers were almost dead, and he was reduced to a condition which most people would have considered an excuse for total idleness. Such a life is a lesson for all men — a lesson of rebuke to many, of hope and encouragement to all who have fallen into disfavor with fortune. Here was a man who, by sheer force of will, overcame the most complete prostration of physical powers that ever left a man alive, and made himself proficient in one of the most difficult of arts. Who, with such an example before him, has a right to mope and despair? — *Times*, May 16, 1868.

A WONDER OF ART. — There is now upon exhibition at Schaus's in Broadway one of the most remarkable works ever executed by human patience and ingenuity : interesting not only to the connoisseur of art, but to the student of the human frame and its forces. It is a small picture, drawn with the exquisite delicacy of a line engraving in sepia or Indian ink, called "A Rat-catcher with his Dogs." It represents a rat-catcher sitting just over a rat-hole with a spud in his hands, while his four dogs await the appearance of the rats from the hole into which the ferrets, whose empty cage is upon the bank, have descended. The marvelous expression of every hair of every dog is not less striking than that of the old rat-catcher. But the wonder of the work is the fact of its execution. It is a picture painted with a hair brush held in the mouth of a wholly paralyzed man, who had had scarcely any instruction in drawing. The story is so incredible that the English gentleman who owns the picture has shown the evidence of its perfect genuineness to several well-known citizens, who have signed a certificate assuring the public that the facts are unquestionably as stated. Among those who have thus signed are William C. Bryant ; D. Huntington, President of the National Academy of Design ; H. T. Tuckerman ; C. A. Dana ; C. G. Thompson ; John R. Thompson ; Hurd and Houghton ; and John B. Bouton. We have satisfied ourselves also, by the most ample proof, that there is no doubt of the authenticity of the work, and we unreservedly commend it to pub-

lic attention both for its intrinsic merit, which is masterly, and for the wonder of its execution. John Carter, who drew the picture, lived in the parish of Coggeshall, not many miles from London, and the vicar of the parish, after Carter's death, wrote a brief biography, which was published by J. W. Parker and Son, among the most respectable of English publishers. From this little Memoir we have but space to quote a letter of Carter's telling his own story. A fac-simile of the butterfly of which he speaks is also at Mr. Schaus's, with two or three interesting little studies, and a slight pencil outline of Carter's face, singularly sweet and refined. The letter is dated Coggeshall, July 17, 1848:—

“DEAR SIR, — In compliance with your wishes I have written down my name and age, etc., as follows : My name is John Carter. I am thirty-three years of age the 31st of this month (July, 1848). After leaving school, where I had been taught to read and write, and made some little progress in arithmetic, I was sent to work at the silk trade. After assisting the weavers for some time, I was put to a loom, and learned to weave in the figured branch ; and, following the example of my fellow-workmen, I was frequently at the public house, and soon took delight in all evil and mischief. It was when I went to school that I first remember having an inclination for drawing. Whenever I had a pen or pencil in my hand I was sure to be drawing in my books or on my slate, and at home about the walls of the house. The manner in which I came to draw, after I had lost the use of my limbs, was as follows : Being fond of reading, I used to borrow books from my neighbors and others. My wife one day brought home for me a tract which gave an account of a young woman in some asylum at Liverpool who had lost the use of her limbs, and

used to amuse herself by drawing with her mouth. The thought at once came into my mind that I might certainly do the same, and I could not rest satisfied till I had made the attempt. My first piece was a butterfly, in water-colors. After drawing in this way for some time I at last adopted the style in which I still continue to draw, which is to shade them after the manner of a line engraving. Dear Sir, I hope your health is improving. May God bless you with all happiness.

"I remain your humble servant,

"JOHN CARTER."

—*Harper's Weekly*, May 16, 1868.

THE chief attraction in the gallery of Mr. Schaus is John Carter's "Rat-catcher with his Dogs," a small drawing in Indian ink, which awakens wonder and admiration in every one who looks at it, and reads the story of the artist. John Carter, whose name was, until recently wholly unknown to a majority of American readers, was an English silk-weaver by trade. In his youth he was idle and dissolute, continually getting into wild scrapes, and disliked by all the neighborhood. A poaching excursion at length nearly cost him his life, and put an end to his wild courses. While robbing a rookery he fell from a fir-tree to the ground, and was taken up and carried home for dead. He revived, however; and though so badly injured in the spine as to be deprived of all use of his arms and the lower portion of his body, his mental faculties, and the powers of sight, hearing, and speech, were unimpaired. But he was apparently worse than dead. The power of

moving his head and neck remained ; the rest of his body was as insensible and lifeless as clay. But John Carter was not without friends. His wife and sister waited on him with the unwearied assiduity of love ; and whatever others could do to occupy and ease his mind, was done. At length a fortunate day brought to his knowledge the case of a young lady who, being deprived of the use of her hands, learned to draw with her mouth ! He caught at the idea, and made the trial himself. Having contrived a desk for his paper, fixed in a convenient position near his head, he began by attempting to draw butterflies and flowers, in water-colors. This he found too difficult, and took a more easily mastered method, that of drawing with a brush in Indian ink. His mode of working was painful and laborious. His wife or sister would fill the brush. Taking it in his mouth he would twirl it round so as to throw off all the superfluous ink and bring the hairs to a fine point. He would then work at his drawing stroke by stroke, slowly, and not without much effort and weariness, resting after every touch and studying the next one. In this manner he executed a large number of exquisite works, characterized by very high artistic qualities. Many an artist who has all the use of his hands would be glad to attain the firmness, the precision, and the delicacy of touch which Carter acquired. He was about twenty years old when injured, and up to that time he had never studied drawing, nor had he evinced any care for pictures. That in his disabled condition he should acquire a knowledge of

drawing and of the principles of composition, is one of the marvels of human experience. — *The Galaxy* for June, 1868.

PORTLAND.

INTERESTING WORK OF ART. — One of the most singular and beautiful monuments of the genius, skill, and the patient industry of man which we have ever seen or heard of, is now on exhibition at the picture store of Andrew Geyer, in Free Street. This is John Carter's famous drawing of the "Rat-catcher and his Dogs," a work which has excited the astonishment and admiration of the whole world of art. It is a small drawing, done in Indian ink, and representing an old man sitting on a bank, surrounded by two or three rough, hairy terriers, and having beside him a common box-trap from which two or three rats are trying to escape. The figure and countenance of the man, the attitude and expression of the dogs, the very rats themselves are depicted with a spirit, an accuracy and truth to life and a delicacy of touch which would be surprising under any circumstances, but which are simply marvelous in view of the way in which they were produced. The little gem of art was executed by a poor man who had lost the use of *all his limbs*, and who handled the camel's-hair pencil with which the drawing is made *entirely with his mouth*. This fact is indisputable, although it seems almost incredible. To add to marvel, Carter had never, before losing the use of his

limbs, received any instruction in drawing. His skill and accuracy of touch were all acquired subsequent to that time. But five drawings of his are known to exist, and these are valued at very large sums. One of them is in the possession of Queen Victoria.

This very beautiful and interesting work will be on exhibition for a few days longer at Geyer's, and none should lose the opportunity of seeing it. To defray the expense of bringing it here a small admission fee is charged. — *Daily Press*.

THE END.

